

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

MARCH 2, 1940

WHO'S WHO

SIGRID UNDSET is the world-author of Norway. From the small village of Lillehammer in a remote part of the country, she raises her magnificent voice in a protest, not only against the robber invasion of Finland but against the essential "idea" of totalitarianism. Recognized by all as one of the greatest thinkers and writers of our times, her appeal for truth and humanity must make everyone think profoundly on the crisis of civilization. In 1928, she was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature. In addition to her earlier novels, she had completed the three-volume epic, *Kristin Lavransdatter*, and was issuing her four-volume work, *The Master of Hestviken*. Her later novels dealt with the contemporary scene. In 1924, at the age of forty-two, she embraced Catholicism, a pioneer in the Scandinavian countries, and since then a shining light of true and humble Faith. . . . GODFREY P. SCHMIDT is Deputy Industrial Commissioner, New York State Department of Labor. Since many discuss a living wage for the family, and since we knew of no masterly determination of the factors, we asked Mr. Schmidt to enlighten us. The second portion of his article will be published next week. . . . RAYMOND CORRIGAN, S.J., Director of the Department of History, St. Louis University, Mo., presents the first of four studies in democracy. He studied in Spain, in Holland, in Germany, in Italy, France and Belgium after his American education. He should know democracy in theory and practice. . . . T. FRANCIS BENNETT is a journalist and freelance writer who covers metropolitan New York. . . . RAYMOND A. GRADY is, according to our memory, our sole writer from Bangor, Me.

EZRA POUND, next week, writes a characteristic essay on *The Inedible*.

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AMERICA. Published weekly by The America Press, 53 Park Place, New York, N. Y., March 2, 1940, Vol. LXII, No. 21, Whole No. 1582. Telephone Barclay 7-8993. Cable Address: Cathreview. United States, 10 cents a copy; yearly \$4.00; Canada, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00. Entered as second-class matter, April 15, 1909, at the Post Office at New York, under Act of March 3, 1879. AMERICA, A Catholic Review of the Week, Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

COMMENT

SIGRID UNDSET wrote her urgent appeal, published on a later page, on January 19. More than a month has passed, and in these mounting days of February, the news from Finland grows more despairing. Little Finland with a tiny army has succeeded in holding back the armies of the Soviets and has endured the rain of the Soviet bombers. It is said that Finland had been promised aid from the democracies. But Finland would defend itself without such pledges. It was hoped that the Scandinavian nations, with whose destinies Finland is bound, would ally themselves against a militaristic Communism that began to roll unwieldily outside of its huge confines. But lacking even hope of such help, Finland determined to fight the aggressor. No nation has declared war on the Soviets, either in defense of Finland or, earlier, of Poland. The Scandinavian peoples, if one can credit reports, would be willing to fight the Soviets; their Governments, however, are seeking their ultimate welfare through a policy of neutrality. They fear Soviet Russia in the future; but they have a graver fear of Nazi Germany now. Germany, undoubtedly, would make Russia's war her own, as part of her own strategy. No nation, though nations fight Germany, makes Finland's defense her own, though Russia fights with Germany. And thus, Europeans grow more complex and are less understood by Americans. Until we comprehend the mystery of Europe, we can do no other than offer, and most liberally, our charity and our moral support. With almost complete unanimity, the American people admire the heroism of Finland and deplore the injustices committed against the Finns. But the first move must come from Finland's friends and neighbors.

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IN the matter of the *Altmark* two questions come to the fore. We are immediately concerned with the liberty assumed for itself, in this instance, by the British Government. Winston Churchill and Mr. Chamberlain may sternly rebuke Oslo. Enthusiasts may quote Chesterton and compare the British captain to Don John of Austria. Americans, however, remain grimly uneasy as we think what His Majesty's Government might perpetrate in our own waters, coastal or inland, if they discovered something there to be "rescued." And the Germans, if they had the chance? The Sudeten and Poland were also "rescued." The wider question of how far can international law be maintained depends, it seems, much on the question as to how far these types of immunity are used with moderation or are overstrained. This may, after all, be pretty much the heart of the question. If non-belligerent ships of belligerents seek neutral refuge occasionally, in moderation, the principle of immunity must stand firm. If immunities, however, are used as a cloak

for building up a whole scheme of planned evasions, say of a blockade, a strain is put on the principle which may make it impossible to maintain.

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TEN years ago, when voices over the air were still something of a marvel and a mystery, we listened to the first broadcasts of the Catholic Hour. Then, we find on checking back, the Catholic speakers and singers were carried on twenty-two stations to seventeen States. The hook-up constituted, then, thirty per-cent of the chain of the National Broadcasting Company. On March 3, current, the Catholic Hour gives a decade birthday-party. It will be carried over ninety-four stations and will penetrate forty-one States, to omit mention of Canada and further-away lands. Now, ninety per cent of the N.B.C. chain welcomes the program. Why has it had one of the longest continuous records in radio programs, and why has it increased and multiplied? Because of a public demand, in the language broadcasters understand. It has had purpose and it has had dignity. It has entertained and it has educated. The weekly programs have made Catholics proud of their Faith and have caused non-Catholics to respect the Catholic Church. The speakers have uttered truth without bitterness, and the music has portrayed beauty with perfect technique. The National Council of Catholic Men, sponsors of the Catholic Hour, deserve ten brilliant candles, expressive of the congratulations of the Catholic United States.

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EUROPEANS say that Americans are ten to fifteen years behind the bandwagon of progress. We would not have it imagined that Europeans are so simple-minded as to believe that they surpass us in material, mechanized growth. Thousands of little gadgets which grace our daily life—scarcely known abroad except in the lives of the very wealthy—are eloquent testimony to our technological growth. What they refer to is our tardy revival of ideas—without new connotations—that have been tried, found wanting, and scrapped years since. As an example in question, Central Europe tried its hand at youth congresses all of fifteen years ago. In the general despair that followed in the wake of the World War and subsequent economic collapse, Reds and Pinks found the soil ready for sowing the seeds of internationalism and class struggle; and the soil was youth. Youth congresses assembled at focal cities in Austria. An account of their proceedings reads like the newspaper reports of the recent American Youth Congress at Washington. But a significant fact relative to those youth congresses at Innsbruck and Vienna fifteen years ago is that many of the leaders are today high in the councils

of Nazi circles. Poor deluded Austrian Youth! The outcome of their organization is a regimented youth movement under a National Socialist dictatorship. It is all well enough for our young people to meet in convention, to express their views and hopes, but it is imperative now to look to their leaders. After betrayal it will matter little whether a dictatorship is of the Hitler or Stalin brand.

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SHEER idiocy is the contemporary "Confucius say" craze. Confucius *did* say, however, that children were to pay special honors to their deceased ancestors. In the minds of Confucius and his descendants, there was absolutely no difference between the bow or the gift that you offer to your parents or grandparents when living and the same inclination or offering that you make to their memory when dead. For centuries, Chinese Christians have been troubled by the fear that idolatry might be implied in this traditional "ancestor worship." Embarrassment created by these fears, and certain Church measures, such as the oath imposed upon missionaries by Pope Benedict XIV in 1742, have greatly hindered conversions. All these scruples are now removed for China by Pope Pius XII, as similar scruples were done away with by Pope Pius XI for Japan (1935) and Manchuria (1936). An Instruction of the Sacred College of Propaganda, dated December 8, 1939, definitely declares:

The inclinations of the head and other manifestations of civil respect paid to the deceased or to their portraits, or even to the tablets of the deceased where the simple name is inscribed, are to be retained as permissible and proper (*licitae et honestae*).

Three million Chinese Catholics rejoice in this act of spiritual liberation.

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SECRETS of his profession, that of a track walker in the subway, were discussed by Saverio Romolo, Neapolitan by origin, with Meyer Berger who writes *About New York* in the *New York Times*. When a walker dies underground, said Mr. Romolo, his companions mark the spot by a cross. "This is to ward off further evil," says Mr. Berger, who mentions this practice as "one of the superstitions of the trade." But is it "superstition" to mark with a cross the scene of an accident? How more fittingly should it be marked? This is an age-old practice in the Catholic Alps. It is an act of reverence for the dead, as well as a wordless appeal to the Saviour for His holy protection. To us it is a sacred thought that these men who perform their silent and grimy rounds beneath the feet of the scurrying multitudes should have faith enough to mark the Cross even in the dismal depths of the subway.

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TARIFF barriers between the States were studied recently by the Department of Commerce. Secretary Hopkins wished to find out why a five-ton motor truck traveling from Alabama to South Carolina should pay a \$400 tax in Alabama, \$400

in Georgia and \$300 in South Carolina, or well over \$1,000 for the trip. State legislation imposes restrictions as to oleomargarine, nursery stock, live stock and general foods, various preferred State products, liquor, fish, milk and dairy products, insurance, chain stores, transient merchants and many other matters. Arguments can be multiplied demonstrating the danger and harmfulness of such "balkanization." It can be extended, at least indirectly, to human beings. But the evils of state tariffs should not blind us to the fact that a very real abuse may underly the application of a wrong remedy. If all forms of agriculture, even of the obviously local type; if all forms of industry are conducted upon a uniformly and recklessly national scale, the fallacies underlying such procedure must inevitably make themselves felt. If State barriers are to be avoided, agriculture and industry should relieve the pressure for such barriers by regulating their own production and distribution through a sound distinction between national and local needs.

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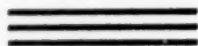
ALL are acquainted with the Moscow claims that it is fighting a purely defensive war against Finnish aggression. Mr. Chamberlain and his Allies have been selling the war as a crusade to make Europe a fit place for the law abiding citizens. More recently, the National Socialist party of Germany has been expanding its propaganda campaign against capitalism, plutocracies and the dominion of gold, all, according to it, firmly entrenched in the bulwark of capitalism, Great Britain. Dr. Ley, head of the German Labor Front, in a recent proclamation simplified the whole thing to a war of the rule of money against labor and labor's representative, the creative human being. Saddling a Communist manifesto to Wagnerian operas he called on the workers of all lands to unite to smash English capitalism.

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RECENTLY we met a man who claimed he had found a new religion. It was a synthesis, he said, something borrowed from Spinoza, something from Plato, something from Christ, something from The Upanishads, something, even, from Mrs. Annie Besant. "Did you find this new religion, or did you found it?" we asked him. "I found it," he said, "but I didn't found it," and we both laughed. "Is there anybody else in it but you?" "No," he replied with a light in his eyes that made him look almost inspired, "it's a personal religion." "That means a one-man religion," we insisted; "What would you think of a one-man nation, a one-fish ocean, a one star universe?" "That would be crazy, wouldn't it?" he replied, and we loved him from that hour. But try taking a poke or a kick, even the politest, at Hitler or Stalin and you will find yourself thrown off your own balance and your elbow or your toe protruding in mid-air. Such is the diabolical nothingness of civilization's arch-enemies at the moment. They offer the mind a complete black-out, and the heart no redress save prayer.

IT NOW SEEMS CLEAR JEFFERSON WAS WRONG

PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.



IT was this same Jefferson who warned the American people that the tendency in every government is to enlarge the scope of the powers entrusted to it. That is why he had small patience with the theory of "trust the Government, and all will be well." In this he has the misfortune to disagree with our Mr. Harold Ickes. Jefferson believed that under this theory all would soon be ill, and he thought that the only way to keep a government within bounds was to bind it with the chains of a written constitution.

Jefferson was wrong, but not wholly wrong. He forgot that a constitution cannot enforce itself. He assumed that the people would always know, at least in general outline, what the Constitution made obligatory, and what it forbade. To complete his folly, he further assumed that, in the light of this knowledge, Americans would always be quick to rise up against the first beginnings of usurpation.

We now know why Jefferson went wrong. He relied too much on the vitality of the spirit expressed in the Virginia *Bill of Rights*, in which it is written: "That no free government, or the blessing of liberty can be preserved to any people, but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality and virtue, and by a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles." One of these principles is "that all men . . . are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights" which no government can take away since they come from God. Jefferson could not know that a century later some Americans would recur to this fundamental principle, but only to deny it, or that an even larger number would completely forget it.

Plainly Jefferson was wrong in assuming that Americans would always take an intelligent interest in government. Could he walk along Constitution Avenue in Washington today, he would realize how wrong he was. Possibly he would philosophize on the mordant wit of the man who gave the Avenue its name. In his day, there was no Avenue here, but only a swamp. There was, however, a Constitution.

Change, many changes, Jefferson would admit, are inevitable. New times bring new problems, and new or altered applications of old principles. You cannot govern 130,000,000 people living in States that stretch from ocean to ocean, as you would govern 3,000,000 people living along the Atlantic seaboard. You cannot govern a people whose interests are, chiefly, clashing commercial interests, as you would govern a people whose interests are commercial only secondarily.

Change must come. But as it comes, Jefferson thought, it must not obscure the truth that every

government tends to enlarge the scope of its limited and enumerated powers. The change calls for greater insistence upon this principle, because when office-holders multiply, the pressure to destroy the principle is intensified.

Governments are no better than the men who administer them. It is dangerous to think of government, State or Federal, as an institution which, raised above all passion or personal interest, administers all things with justice, equity and wisdom. It is folly to palter with the assumption that men who assert that their only aim is to work for the welfare of the people, can safely be permitted to exercise powers limited only by their interpretation of the extent of these powers. Every tyrant, from the dawn of history to Stalin and Hitler, has enslaved the people on that plea. Benevolent intentions have never proved a satisfactory substitute for a written constitution.

Hundreds of political groups, responsible, more or less loosely, to Congress or to the Executive, are at work at Washington. As a writer in this Review pointed out recently, although the Government issues thousands of publications every year, there is no official register which lists and describes all the Government's agencies and bureaus. We do not know their number, but eight years ago, when they certainly were far fewer, we were assured by Mr. Roosevelt that Washington had too many. All these rapidly multiplying agencies are seeking to retain their emergency powers, or to increase them. If they are not, then human nature has changed essentially. Other agencies, not on an emergency basis, are actively engaged in campaigns, always at the expense of the tax-payer, to enlarge their authority.

It was not pleasant to listen to the admission of E. S. Smith, of the National Labor Relations Board, that he had used the Government's time and money to organize a campaign to influence Congress against changes in the Wagner Act. Similar campaigns were arranged by regional directors of the Board. But that the Labor Board is the sole offender in lobbying against legislation, is improbable.

It is fairly common knowledge at Washington that every creature of Congress has a "lobby" working, usually under a glorified name, to exercise pressure on Congress. It is also common knowledge that such movements by Federal officials are in violation of Federal law. Most of these lobbyists are probably clever enough to keep within the letter of the law, while defying its purpose. The facts brought out by Edmund Toland at the hearings of the House Committee, appointed to investigate the Labor Board, are not likely to be more than a warning that hereafter lobbying must be carried on more carefully. To end this illegal and dangerous practice, an alert Congress and a Department of Justice that will prosecute, are needed.

Yes, Jefferson was wrong when he assumed that Americans would always be quick to resent usurpations by any Governmental agency. But in his belief that the sure way to turn a constitutional Government into a dictatorship is to allow usurpations to pass unnoted, he was eternally right.

FINLAND FIGHTS FOR LIFE— HER OWN AND THAT OF EUROPE

Lies and terror are the Soviet and Nazi weapons

SIGRID UNDSET

IT is not merely that Finland refuses to yield to terror. It is not merely that the renowned Red army, up to date (January 19), may be said to have made war on the men of Finland with exceedingly small success. Against the women and children of Finland, against patients and nurses in hospitals, they have, up to now, waged war much more successfully.

In the little villages, with no combatants and with no protection against air raids, in places which the small Finnish air force cannot reach and defend, they have successfully smashed cottages and houses by the hundred. They have forced the inhabitants to flee, at a temperature of twenty-two below zero, along the open roads where Soviet planes can let their machine guns play full bore against the caravans of women and children.

Our Norwegian ambulances tell us about it. During the few days they have been active over there, they have experienced what it means to bring patients down to bombproof rooms—which very often are not so very bombproof after all. People with double pneumonia, men who have just undergone an amputation, who a moment ago had to be given blood transfusions, must be dressed in a room where the icy air streams in through burst windows. Then they must be brought somewhere—to some place which is less exposed. Now they remove the Red Cross marks from hospital roofs and ambulances: no good to call the Russians' attention to their favorite targets.

Up to now, the Finnish soldiers have succeeded in the defense of their frontiers against forces exceedingly superior in numbers. But they cannot possibly succeed in the long run. They know it themselves: not unless they get support, men and arms. It is urgent, time is pressing.

They cannot defend the civilian population in those parts of the country that are remote from their long front line. They know they could manage that, too, if they could get a sufficient number of fighters and guns, get their air defenses sufficiently strengthened. But it is urgent.

Democracies will never fight, democracies are too rotten—we have all heard that sneer of the dictators. Well, Finland fights for her life as a nation. But Finland's battle concerns the whole civilized

world. God knows, democracies are not immaculate; all of them have many and heavy sins to account for. Promises and treaties were broken before our world saw the rise of totalitarian states. Politics used crooked ways, deceit and lies before that time, too. Yet there was always present some sort of common sense in the nations; a warning voice which said: Truth is the safest foundation to build upon; the Lie is a thing one ought to resist.

In reality, the most horrible thing about the concept of the new Totalitarian States is this: on principle, they prefer to work *with* lies. Here is a perfectly grotesque fact. In our times we are fully aware that, where the so-called exact sciences are concerned, in physics or medicine for instance, the urgent demand is truthfulness, in the widest meaning of this concept. Straight thinking, an incorruptible will to make precise observations, a conscientious manipulation of every scrap of material in hand is demanded, lest the work should be entirely wasted. Where the social sciences are concerned, however, when it comes to work upon the minds of men, leading men of our times put their trust in lies above everything else.

With lies and with terror National Socialism and National Communism are striving to foster in the human intellect all the qualities that will make it impotent to think straight, that will weaken its sense of realities.

Truly, this is Fates' most cruel irony! The white man has, for some centuries, prided himself on the advance of enlightenment. He has scornfully looked back upon the superstitions of the "Dark Centuries"—which mostly were conditioned by erroneous interpretations of sound observations, in many cases because men lacked scientific means of control, and mostly were given in perfectly good faith.

But now we have lived to see men who felt themselves called to be the leaders of their people deliberately propagate superstitions which they cannot possibly believe in themselves. They use all the means of modern propaganda and educational technique to prevent men in their countries from thinking for themselves, and thus from being less easily led in the way their leaders would drive them.

On such ideologies you cannot build a society.

The nations that cultivate them *must* attempt the subjection of their neighboring nations, must suck the life-blood out of them in order to prolong their own existence for a while, must march on for fresh prey. If they succeed in their desire of destroying Europe, they must try to win support on the other continents. They must inculcate their lethal ideologies in the nations overseas, they must provoke war on every continent. There is a possibility that this may happen. If Finland succumbs, it surely will happen.

World cultures have broken down before now. Large culture-creating people have been reduced to small vegetating tribes of fellahin. Now it is our European-American culture which is at stake. It is built on our classical inheritance which, among other things, is the foundation of all our scientific and of all our technical progress. It is founded on Christianity which maintained that no human being is entirely without worth or dignity, since they were one and all of such worth that a God should die for them. This is the foundation of the democratic view of life.

The states that have been built on democracy are far from being immaculate or free from sin.

Nor are the individuals who call themselves democrats free from guilt. But the democratic conception of human life will eternally contain the elements necessary for a possible regeneration of human society, for social adjustment and bettering of the peoples' conditions under leadership of the fittest individuals, namely, the men and women who have the courage and the will to respect truth, whether they seek the true laws of the nature that environs us, or the truth about our human nature.

This is exactly what Finland fights for. Shall her battle end in the victory of a conception of life which, in spite of human imperfections, contains all the elements that a culture can live by, because it respects realities and truths?

Or shall the victory be with those ideologies which, forever, will be impotent to fulfil their promises of building some new and splendid future world. Their building activity is a dream activity, directed by wishful thinking, while their actual activity will always be destructive, since it disregards truth.

This is why Finland's battle is a battle for the future of all Europe. And for the future of the Americas, too, be sure of that!

THE COST OF LIVING AND A FAMILY LIVING WAGE

Norms and methods needed to reach solutions

GODFREY P. SCHMIDT



SUCH documents as *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, together with the American Bishops' *Program of Social Reconstruction* and their recent *Statement on The Church and Social Order* were necessarily general in their treatment of social problems. Covering such a vast range of significant and delicate subjects from the standpoint of basic principles, the Pope's Encyclicals and the Bishops' Statements could not be expected, and were not intended, to serve as casuistical texts. They presented fundamental moral principles whose application to changing temporalities required further and continued study and effort.

Things are not finished by documents, regardless of their merit. Papal and episcopal letters, if they fulfil their purpose, begin rather than end work. There is indeed the dialectical work of un-

packing implications, of making precisions, of probing deeper into the enduring morality and philosophy of those profound documents. Above all, there is the need for applications. It can be as difficult to apply as to isolate and state for the first time.

In no segment of the broad circle of subjects treated by the Papal encyclicals have moralists found it easier to forget concrete applications (because of preoccupation with abstract goals) than in the matter of "minimum family wages." And in our books there is manifest lack of prudence to choose, and of art to devise the means which might reduce abstractions to concrete measures.

METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

The very notion of "living wage for a family" needs practical pointing and refinement before it

can give direction to efforts at applying it to actual families in a given political or geographical area. The methodological problems inherent in establishing a specific standard of living wage, of ascertaining familial cost of living, and of keeping abreast of the variations imposed by changing conditions, all these need attention in any particularized study of the family wage.

An insight into the complications of such a methodological study is afforded by consideration of a few of the preliminary matters that must be settled theoretically and *practically* before even the terms of reference of any adequate living wage investigation can be decided upon.

In the first place, how does one begin to fix, in units of money, a living wage? By taking counsel, by investigation. Of whom? Well, the problem is to ascertain what it costs an employee to live. We might investigate actual budgets of employees, or of the public in general; or we might construct our own budgets.

Shall the investigation take the form of "expenditure studies" which show *how much is spent* by different people in different places selected as representative samples, and *what* is purchased by families selected according to some plan designed to sift out representative families of a predetermined or random type? Or shall it take the form of a cost-of-living study to show how much would have to be spent in a given area to buy *predetermined quantities of predetermined commodities or services*, compiled to represent a fairly standard content of living?

If an "expenditure study" is decided upon, to what family types will the investigation be carried in order to get a representative cross-section? If a "commodity-quantity budget" is studied, what will be the specific commodities services and quantities, and what standard of living will they implement?

COMMODITY-QUANTITY BUDGETS

These result from no exact technique or methodology. They necessarily derive from many compromises which vary in nature and number as the area of study is increased. Dietetics and research in nutrition have indeed gone far to determine minimal food requirements for adults, for children, for manual workers, for office workers and others. Basic housing standards are also available in a somewhat lesser degree. But, as to the other essentials of living (clothing, medical care, insurance, savings, etc.) there is no authoritative or generally agreed-upon measure. In this respect budget allowances are either well advised estimates or averaged statistics of actual expenditures. In regard to the latter, the clues of prudent or imprudent spending are usually either disregarded or fairly well obliterated. Says Margaret L. Stecker in *Inter-city Differences in Cost of Living in March, 1935, 59 Cities* (W.P.A. Research Monograph XII, p. XII):

Actual consumption by families whose purchases seem to supply the needs of health and self-respect forms the basis for certain budget allowances. If it appears, however, that some goods and services are being obtained through skimping on other es-

entials, a synthetic budget must bring the other essentials up to satisfactory standards. If, on the other hand, it is apparent that certain expenditures cannot be made at the level specified without the sacrifice of others more necessary from a common-sense viewpoint, synthetic budgets will not include them.

Thus, synthetic budgets of a balanced content of living at a minimum level in some respects are superior to the consumption habits of the class they represent and in others they are inferior.

Thus, the budget to be constructed may be based: (a) upon actual expenditures of individuals, or of families; or (b) upon synthetic estimates of a balanced content of living, measured in terms of what are deemed to be standard commodities and services in adequate amounts; or else, a combination of the two methods is relied upon.

But, a more basic and perhaps more disputable method or norm for a practical investigation of family wages must still be decided upon. To what level of living are these actual or estimated budgets to be related?

LEVELS OF LIVING

Those who would fix a wage sufficient to meet the "cost of living" must know the kind of living the wage is supposed to provide. There are various scales of living between the low of the sharecropper or berry picker and the high of a Doris Duke. Various minimum-wage laws go about as far as the encyclicals in describing general norms related to the level of living contemplated. Thus, the following standards are incorporated in the statutory texts in one or the other State law: "the living wage standard," the "wage that industry can bear standard," the "commensurate return standard," the "wages paid in the State for work of like or comparable standard," the "adequate maintenance and protection of health standard," and so on.

Such generalities, however, do not furnish a deductive basis for definitive calculation of cost of living at the described level of living. Nor do they identify the methods for realizing their aims. The State laws leave that to the experts, the technically equipped and the experienced in such affairs. By the latter, standards must be translated into commodity-quantity budgets, wages, or living costs.

None of these standards expressly prescribes mere subsistence level (just enough to keep body and soul together) although such a level is consistent with some of the standards considered alone. Mere subsistence wages seem to be justly and generally reprobated.

Shall the plane of living to which a study of the family living wage is geared be what is called the "emergency level"? Such a level realistically takes into account the economies necessitated by depression conditions. Insofar as health and other hazards are implied, if family living were subdued to such an emergency level for a considerable period of time, that level stands condemned by the same considerations which condemn a mere subsistence level. But, economic realities have a way of interfering with the best laid plans and aspirations of men, and economic necessity might make temporary resort to an emergency level unavoidable. When, and

in what circumstances? That is a practical problem which must be answered, perhaps, before any attempt is made to define in dollars and cents what an emergency level is. In any case it might be enlightening to have the figures and to develop the methodology of such a living level.

Shall the standard of living be a maintenance level representing normal or average minimum requirements for industrial service and other manual workers and their families? Shall the budget be related to the more liberal standards of maintenance, health and decency? Finally, shall the standard be the "abundant life" which, with auto in garage and chicken in the ubiquitous pot, rounded out the glowing promise of a satisfactory "American standard of living"?

No matter how well calculated any standard of living, it must, because it is an average or an approximation, fail in places and for given persons to be realistic. Moreover, budgets and standards of all kinds will be more or less elaborate technical games or research exercises and nothing more unless they are at least realistic enough reasonably to represent existing expenditure and consumption habits. For example, silk stockings for women are necessities and not luxuries no matter what were the habits of a bygone day and in spite of the ladies who do not like Japan.

HANDLING OF DATA

Analysis of research data on family expenditure becomes particularly intricate and requires a special acumen because, even though the family spends as a unit, such a unit is a very poor statistical measure due to variations in the family's size and sex, age and habit patterns. In other words, there are variations in consumer demand within each family because of differences of needs and tastes within the familial group.

In order to handle this special difficulty a method of statistical weighting had to be devised and used. For example, there is the elaborate and somewhat hypothetical computation of family size, wage needs and cost of living in terms of the so-called "expenditure units." Such units represent efforts to find a common denominator for family expenses in view of the variant pocketbook drains in families of different compositions, even where the same number of persons is involved. Expenditure units are based on estimates of customary relative expenditures without taking into account the adequacy of the goods consumed, psychologically and physiologically. Certain publications of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Department of Labor describe the ingenious statistical technique of arriving at expenditure units, after study of many different patterns of family expenditure from year to year. (For example, see *Bulletin* #637 of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 22, ff.)

PROBLEMS OF FAMILY COMPOSITION

The technician who has successfully settled problems of the caliber of those indicated by the foregoing discussion must be ready for still others. If family costs of living, as a basis for family wages,

are to be surveyed, the investigation must be prosecuted in the light of statistics related to families of given sizes and compositions. The W.P.A., for example, used the "average census private family which consists of 4.01 persons." (*W.P.A. Research Monograph XII*, p. XIII). Even in such an "average family" a large number of variant groupings is possible: for example, a father (manual worker, low salary), mother and two small children; father (office worker, good salary), mother, two grown daughters; father (clerical worker, poor salary), three boys of high school age, etc. Then, there are family groups whose social activities are simple; others devote much family time and income to many social activities or pretensions.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Federal Labor Department recently published a bulletin on family expenditures in Chicago during 1935 and 1936. That study was limited to seven types of families: 1. Families of two; 2. Families of three including one child under sixteen; 3. Families of four including two children under sixteen; 4. Families of three or four including one person sixteen or over and one (or no) other person regardless of age; 5. Families of five or six including one child under sixteen, one person sixteen or over, and one or two others regardless of age; 6. Families of five or six with three or four children under sixteen; 7. Families of seven or eight with one child under sixteen and four or five others regardless of age.

In selecting types of families for family wage studies by what norm will the practical investigation be regulated? Merely to pose this question after citing two examples is to uncover a great number of theoretical and practical difficulties.

Usually the investigatory standards selected will be adjusted to urban areas (because of the greater ease of investigation in those areas); and they are modified as necessity requires for accommodation to such special difficulties as those of climate or local conditions.

RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Information on cost of living on which living wage researches are predicated is generally obtained by Labor Departments through interviews with technical experts in the various fields and local merchants conducted by field agents who record the information upon the schedule or questionnaire forms previously devised by those who plan the investigation. For example, in preparing its cost of living surveys, the New York State Department of Labor, Division of Women in Industry and Minimum Wage, gathers its price data by trained investigators whose instructions and schedule forms constitute in themselves a sizeable mimeographed volume comprising thirty-eight pages of instructions and twice that number of pages devoted to twenty-one forms and tally sheets. The fact that trained workers in this field deemed so many forms and such elaborate instruction necessary is some indication that the collection of statistics on family spending and commodity or service pricing as a means to establish minimum wages is very time-consuming, skill-exacting and expensive.

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA WORKS THOUGH IT WOBBLES

In Europe, however, it scarcely ever functions well

RAYMOND CORRIGAN

AMERICAN democracy is a natural growth; much of the "democracy" of continental Europe is artificial construction. Sound and strong like an oak in an open prairie, the American system has drawn its sustenance from the soil and grown hardier by the free play of natural forces. Or, to change the figure, the architects and builders of America have planned and constructed, consciously or unconsciously, according to the materials which lay ready to hand. In Europe the process resembled more the dynamiting of a great cathedral followed by a vain effort to employ its scattered stones in the building of a factory. The result has been, often enough, grotesque or at best unnatural.

Mingled with our rugged virtues and our idealism there has been, of course, much greed and selfishness and jungle ethics. In the land of opportunity, rich men have grown richer by methods that were often criminal. They have exploited our natural resources with reckless disregard for the future. They have exploited human beings with callous brutality. Their liberal fallacies have given them a feeling of righteousness and clothed their high-handed tyranny with a sanctimonious halo. They have bought the connivance and the active support of our lawmakers. Mouthing their shibboleths of "due process of law," the "sacred right of property" and "freedom of contract," the strong have crushed the weak, the rich have robbed the poor, the new privileged barons of the business world have endeavored to maintain a condition that at times looked like serfdom for the lower classes.

There was, however, a healthy element in all this display of boundless energy. During many decades the country piled its wealth mountain high, while on the lowest social levels there was a well warranted hope to cheer the struggle for a comfortable existence. The habitual tolerance of the American for malefactors of great wealth seems to indicate that he accepts wholesale abuses as inevitable in a system that is wholly natural.

Our cavalier attitude toward big business is matched by what amounts to a cynical indifference in politics. In the story of vigorous young democracy a long chapter must be devoted to the veiled dishonesty of most politicians and to the shameless effrontery of not a few. From the back room

of the corner saloon to the halls of the Senate, graft in varying degrees has too often been taken for granted. The indignation that is aroused by an occasional scandal in high places smacks of hypocrisy. The worst feature of the disgraceful story has been the apparent inability of the better citizens to stop evils which everyone knew to exist over long periods of time.

Like a man of strong constitution, the American feels that his powerful Government can still afford to be careless about points of political hygiene, though now and then he does betray some irritation with political halitosis. Still, America remains the natural home of democracy with all its abuses, avoidable and unavoidable.

America has, in truth, created little in the political order. Nor have our thinkers displayed remarkable originality. We have inherited sane ideas and workable institutions, and we have had the good sense to develop them without trying wild experiments of any kind. Our heritage came to us from England, which nation, with all her faults, has been conservative and cautious in holding to older traditions.

Prescinding for the moment from the specific contentions of those who insist upon a scholastic pedigree for American democracy, we find no difficulty in tracing the fundamentally sound thought of the founding fathers of the Republic back to the clear thinking of the Christian thirteenth century. Even the doubtful influence of John Locke could not divert us from the right road.

What a difference, for example, between the course of sane political action and thought in young America and the nearly parallel turgid and wild gyrations of Voltairean France! For the French, Locke was poison; for us, his deviations from correct philosophy were neutralized by the strong current of American common sense.

Here is as good a place as any to dispose of the illusion that "democracy" in continental Europe has always been a beneficent institution. Switzerland, Holland and the smaller countries have been fairly successful in applying popular sovereignty. But the record of the greater powers can scarcely be used as an argument for indiscriminate adoption of what has been in most cases an alien system.

The French Revolution, whatever else it may have been, was a repudiation of the nation's past, and the democracy which it claimed as its noblest product has never been more than a party possession in France. Three major revolutions during the following century showed that reaction and royalty had to be beaten down by violence. These revolutions had their repercussions in Italy and in the Germanies. In the realm of thought the ravings, Rousseauvian or Jacobean, of the Revolutionary era effected a radical and vitiating change. In other circumstances importations from England might have taken root and produced a healthy growth. As things actually were, "democracy" in France, Spain and Italy was unsound from the beginning.

There really is no definition that fits all the good, bad and indifferent doctrine or practice which is called democracy. Even our American variety has evolved through a century and a half. But with us there is a definite system, the later organic evolution of which but serves to reveal the more hidden virtues of its embryonic state. We have reason to be grateful for what we have received from a disintegrating Christendom and for the stimulating conditions in which we have been able to develop unhampered by memories of a diseased past.

We should not be arrogant or proud of advantages that came to us with very little effort of our own. We did not have to wreck an old regime by revolutionary methods. Our thinking, when we had to think, was not poisoned by Rousseauvian dogmas of the general will, natural goodness, and integral liberalism.

We have been spared the strain and schism consequent upon anti-clerical movements abroad. We were never faced with the dilemma which Tocqueville lamented. With us the champions of liberty, equality and progress were not committed to hostility against religion, Christian tradition and authority; nor was the defense of morality and religion bound up with a fear of freedom and social justice. Our country was born in a religious atmosphere. At least, irreligion was not then considered good form.

The infant steps of our early democracy were guided by aristocrats who, for the most part, could afford to be generous. True, "the rich, the good and the wise" had an eye to their own material interests. But in the wide, open spaces of America there was never room for any class conflict in the Marxian sense of the term. The powerful had little incentive to try oppression on a large scale. Their fortunes increased even as the common man improved his lot. And on the lower levels the way to prosperity could only be blocked by revolt. Whatever revolutionary change there was could be furthered without violence. American democracy grew by a gradual process of evolution.

Our Constitution was made by men of property whose first thought may well have been for the security of their lands and their bank accounts. If universal manhood suffrage is an essential for democracy, they showed no liking for it. Their republican form of government was in no way asso-

ciated with a mere counting of votes. Nevertheless, the votes came with the rise of new States on the expanding frontier. The advance of democracy, merely as a political method, was assured from the beginning.

One need not be a partisan of extreme views on the importance of the crude and raw West to recognize its wholesome effect in freeing the American, rich or poor, from problems the European had to solve. Economic opportunity, for the aggressive pioneer, was more vital to democracy than all the machinery of vote counting. But the two went hand in hand in the vast area where new men on new land were building American democracy. Other forces, old and new, were developing the Atlantic seaboard. Throughout America the elements, political, economic, social and religious, which constitute a working democratic system enjoyed the elbow room necessary for healthy growth.

Our politicians have badly discredited popular sovereignty and the voting process. The unethical capitalist has multiplied abuses in our economic system. Religion has become a sort of lingering shadow emptied of much of its spiritual content. But a glance at these essential features of democratic life reveals that on every count the American still has decided advantages over the European. Our democracy, at least its specifically American political and economic features, suits our particular needs, and this in spite of all its defects.

Transplant it to Mussolini's Italy or Franco's Spain, and it becomes nothing more nor less than a misfit. Democracy in these countries has been identified, quite simply, with bad government. It has created a hunger for what only a strong authoritarian ruler can give. Of course, if one means by democracy that equality which all men have "in the eyes of God," then it is no less imperative in Italy or Spain than it is in the United States. But the strange fact is that most Americans are proud of what are, after all, very accidental aspects of democracy, and they make the mistake of pitying other peoples for not possessing them.

Foreigners are not far wrong when they analyze our democracy and find it to consist largely of "more automobiles for the workers, more telephones, more radios," and more toothbrushes. They are also not far wrong when they point out the contrast between the sanity of our American Revolution and the irrationality of the French Revolution. We helped to create the era of modern democracy. But we did so with circumstances very much in our favor. And we continued to be favored during most of the period of our national growth.

Shall it be said that we have squandered our heritage, that our democracy has deteriorated in quality, that we do not deserve to retain our happy state? A little self-analysis will show that we, too, are drifting toward the omnipotent state. How far are we from "bread and circuses?" Jefferson wrote that "all men are created equal." We still hold that they are equal. Have we forgotten that they were "created?" Our republican form of government and our democratic spirit are still with us. But eternal vigilance is still the price of liberty.

MANY MAY RESOLVE BUT VERY FEW ACT

T. FRANCIS BENNETT



CATHOLIC Action has long been a favorite theme at Communion breakfasts and Holy Name meetings. By adhering to generalities and repeating an exhortation to Catholic Action at proper intervals no orator can go wrong. But what of the millions of Catholics who are awake to the need of a militant Catholicism, who are spiritually prepared to cooperate with the clergy and the Hierarchy in advancing the cause of Christ, but who are inactive because they, as individuals, feel isolated from the working organization of the Church?

More than an urging to vague and intangible Catholic Action is demanded if the individual Catholic is to function effectively in the organization of the lay apostolate. The successful spread of Russian Communism in the United States was accomplished, in spite of its specious philosophy and its program of enslavement of the individual, mainly because of the organizational ability of the Communist International. The principle of "democratic centralism" not only safeguarded the dictatorial power of Stalin, but provided for the exercise of initiative and individual activity on the part of the least member of the vast international network.

The rôle of the individual Communist in the program of international Communism was emphasized repeatedly not only in the meetings of local and national committees but even at the world congresses held in Moscow. In 1935, at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, George Dimitrov declared: "It should be stated categorically that any Communist worker, any revolutionary worker . . . who does not fight to transform the reformist trade union into a real class trade union organization, who does not fight for trade-union unity on the basis of the class struggle, such Communist worker, such revolutionary worker, does not discharge his elementary proletarian duty." The rôle of the individual, so important in the Communist scheme of organization, has been neglected in Catholic Action. When an issue confronts the Church, the responsibility for action is invariably foisted upon the clergy or an existing Catholic group. In either case the individual Catholic is deprived of the opportunity to participate, even though he may not only be qualified but better able to cope with the issue than the clergy or the corporate body.

It must be noted here that the writer does not advocate any new organizations among the Catholic laity. If anything, there are too many, and frequently overlapping, organizations among us. But the existence of a thousand organizations, with a capital O, does not nullify the obvious need of organization, with a small o, to permit the individual

Catholic to function personally and effectively in the work of Catholic Action. In fact, unless the rôle of the individual is assigned its proper significance in the program of the Church Militant, the phrase Catholic Action shall become meaningless except when applied to a minority of leaders in Catholic life.

Anyone who studies the problem of the individual Catholic will soon understand that the latter's position as an inactive bystander in the program of Catholic activity is attributable only to the absence of effective, democratic organization. The individual members of a Holy Name Society, for example, are impressed with the threat to the morality of the neighborhood by lewd magazines on the newsstands. A member brings the subject to the attention of the next meeting and discovers that others are aware of the situation. Action appears imminent, until, at length, a charter member arises and proposes a resolution, which is unanimously adopted. Or, perhaps, the charter member recommends the formation of a committee to wrestle with the issue. In that case, the committee meets and formulates a formidable resolution, which is accepted by unanimous vote on the second Monday of the following month.

How much more effective such resolutions would be if they were carried out by the individual members! If the two or three most popular of the guilty newsdealers were designated by name and if each member pledged himself not only to boycott the offenders but make known in his own personal manner his indignation, the indecent literature would disappear from the neighborhood stands.

At the Communion breakfast of a group of civil service employes several months ago, a visiting orator deprecated the influx of Communists into the department and the open delivery and sale of the *Daily Worker* in the offices. The employes warmly approved of the open condemnation of a situation which they faced every day and listened intently, expecting the speaker to reveal corrective measures to curb the Red domination. But the speaker concluded only with the assuring thought that the Church would eventually triumph over its enemy of the moment. The following morning the employes returned to their tasks to watch the untarried progress of the enemies of Church and country until the next annual Communion breakfast.

The answer to the failure of the Catholic laity to cooperate effectively in the work of Catholic Action is to be found either in the ignorance or the neglect of the application of the elementary principles of organization by Catholic leaders. The Catholic laity is not only qualified to participate in the activity of the Church but is earnestly seeking the guidance and leadership that are essential to unity and the attainment of a Catholic goal. It is the duty of Catholic leadership to take cognizance of and to utilize the strength of the laity by setting up an efficient organization that will include the many as well as the few in the assignment of vital and responsible rôles. When, and only when, this is accomplished, the phrase Catholic Action will once again take on its literal and intended meaning.

CHRONICLE

THE ADMINISTRATION. Following Senate approval, Colonel Philip B. Fleming assumed the title of Wage-House Administrator. He has been administrator in fact since last Fall, but special permission of Congress was necessary for him, as an army officer, to take a civilian post. . . . The United States Lines, with approval of the Maritime Commission and of the State Department, sold eight of its ships, including the *President Harding*, to a Belgian corporation. The ships were immediately transferred to the Belgian flag. The United States Lines owns forty per cent of the Belgian concern's stock. . . . Under-Secretary of State Sumner Wells and Myron C. Taylor, President Roosevelt's personal representative to the Pope, sailed for Europe. . . . Attorney General Robert H. Jackson announced he would drop the prosecution against sixteen persons indicted in Detroit on a charge of recruiting there for the Spanish Red army. The F.B.I. raided the headquarters of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in New York and subpoenaed its officers before it was known that Attorney General Jackson intended to drop all charges against Communists accused of enlisting Americans to fight for the Reds in Spain. . . . On board the cruiser *Tuscaloosa*, accompanied by two destroyers, President Roosevelt sped to the Panama Canal, inspected the Canal defenses.

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CONGRESS. For the purpose of investigating and reporting violations of the election laws during the 1940 balloting, Vice President Garner appointed a committee consisting of Senators Gillette, Miller, Hill, Tobey and Reed. . . . Denouncing the questions on personal finance ordered by the Census Bureau for the forthcoming census, Senator Tobey declared: "The Congress restricted the census to questions on population and unemployment. Nowhere in the act are income questions authorized. The bureau officials, acting without authority, inserted these questions. . . ." The queries constitute an "invasion of the natural rights of privacy of every citizen," the Senator said. . . . Passed by the House and sent to the Senate was a Naval Appropriation Bill of \$965,772,878. This amount, setting a peace-time record, was \$112,693,139 below the President's budget estimate for the measure. From the bill, the House by a vote of 124 to 113 eliminated funds for improving the harbors at Guam, on the ground such improvements constituted a first step in plans to build a great Guam naval base which might lead to war with Japan. . . . Declaring that President Roosevelt "hopes by his silence on the third-term question to persuade the Democrats to draft him," Senator Ellison D. (Cotton Ed) Smith, dean of the Senate, said if the President is renominated: "I will walk out of the convention." . . . Representative Dies asserted Hollywood pro-

ducers were attempting to block the forthcoming investigation of Communist infiltration in the movie colony. . . . Senator Donahey refused to run in the Ohio primaries as a "stalking horse" to secure and hold delegates which could be later turned over to President Roosevelt for a third-term nomination. . . . Charging that the British were rifling American mail in order to obtain business information to enable their merchants to underbid Americans in world markets, Representative Maas proposed that mail be transported on United States warships.

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WASHINGTON. From his expedition in the Antarctic, Admiral Byrd radioed to the Navy Department that the south magnetic pole has moved from its 1909 location. . . . Indications of European hoarding of United States paper currency were contained in the report that, during 1939, \$110,200,000 in paper money went to Europe and only \$9,800,000 came back. . . . Borrowers from thirty-one Government corporations have defaulted to the extent of \$1,053,742,488 in principal and interest payments, the Treasury reported to Congress. Concerning these Government corporations, Senator Byrd declared that since their financial operations do not appear in the Federal budget it is not generally known "to what extent they have obligated the Federal Treasury." . . . The House committee investigating the National Labor Relations Board continued hearings. Testimony indicated that Board officials promoted lobbying activities to sway Congress, induced labor leaders to send pressure telegrams to Congress, rounded up witnesses to block changes in the Wagner Act, lined up local A. F. of L. unions to show that William Green's proposed changes to the Act did not represent A. F. of L. rank-and-file opinion. Attorney General Jackson was asked to determine if the Board officials had violated the law prohibiting lobbying by Federal employees. Davis J. Saposs, Board economic research chief, said he had been a teacher at the Brookwood Labor College in Katonah, N. Y., which was condemned by the A. F. of L. council as a Communist school. . . . The Board had arrangements with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation whereby it recommended that loan disbursements be withheld from companies against which it had issued complaints, J. Warren Madden, Board chairman, disclosed.

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AT HOME. The "One-Two" plan which, while leaving all eligible citizens with one vote would give two votes to citizens who could produce a real estate or income tax receipt, was reported to be spreading on the Pacific Coast. . . . Robert William

Wiener, also known as Welwel Warszower, Communist party treasurer, was convicted of passport fraud, sentenced in New York to two years in prison by Federal Judge Knox who recommended that at the conclusion of the prison term Wiener be sent back to his native Russia. . . . The Interstate Commerce Commission ordered the Eastern railroads to return on March 24 to the two-cents-a-mile rate established in 1936. The roads had been granted, on July 5, 1938, permission to experiment with a maximum basic coach fare of two-and-one-half cents a mile for eighteen months. . . . The Finnish Relief Fund, Inc., headed by Herbert Hoover, has thus far forwarded \$1,200,000 to Finland. . . . The Republican National Committee voted to hold the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia on June 24. Following the Republican announcement, Democratic chieftain, James A. Farley, selected July 15 as the date for the Chicago convention of the Democratic party. The Republican Program Committee, following two years of research, released its report containing a proposed platform for adoption by the party's convention. The report recommends decreased spending, budget balance by 1942, encouragement of private enterprise, local relief control, Trade Pact Act, Wagner Act revisions, numerous other suggestions. . . . In Louisiana, Governor Earl K. Long, brother of Huey, was defeated in the Gubernatorial contest by Sam Houston Jones.

GREAT BRITAIN. To hide its war costs from the enemy, the Government introduced a system of token votes. Each appropriation for war supplies will be for 100 pounds. In passing each token vote, even the Parliament will not know how much money it is voting. Only the Cabinet will know. . . . London offered protective naval convoys to all vessels, including those of the United States, passing through Allied contraband control, whether the ships are carrying cargo for Britain or not. . . . A commercial pact was announced between France and Britain. Its objective is to open their markets to each other, to win Germany's world trade. . . . The British Treasury announced it would take control of holdings in sixty securities on the United States market held by individual Britons. Owners of the securities will be paid prices current on the day of the Government decree. This represents the second step in wartime wealth conscription. The first, ordered at the war's beginning, required registration by Britons with the Bank of England of their holdings of United States dollar securities.

WAR. On the Karelian Isthmus Russian mass attacks forced the Finns back from their front positions in the Mannerheim Line to secondary fortifications. Viborg came within easier range of Soviet guns. Northeast of Lake Ladoga the Finns blocked a Red flank thrust at the Mannerheim Line. Bolshevik sky raiders continued incessant bombing of Finn cities. . . . Russian airmen bombed the Swedish town of Pajala, destroyed six houses, wounded

two Swedes. . . . The British destroyer *Daring* was sunk by a German submarine. . . . On February 16, the German vessel *Altmark*, tankship of the scuttled *Admiral Graf Spee*, carrying 299 British prisoners, was passing through Norwegian territorial waters with Norway's permission and with Norwegian warships guarding it. Accosted by British ships, the *Altmark* entered the Norwegian Joesing Fjord. Ordered by London to take the British prisoners with or without the permission of Norway, the British destroyer *Cossack* entered the fjord, boarded the *Altmark*, killed five German sailors, wounded five, took off the British prisoners. When Norway protested violation of her territory, Britain rejected the protest. . . . Berlin protested to Norway, told London a British prize crew recently took the captured German freighter *Duesseldorf* through the Panama Canal with permission of Washington. . . . The Thirteenth Hague Convention deprives belligerents of the right of search in neutral waters, permits passage of prizes and belligerent warships through such waters. . . . London decreed arming of her merchant ships to protect them from air attack. Berlin declared this act destroys the London submarine agreement. . . . King Gustaf announced Sweden could not intervene in Finland.

FOOTNOTES. Nazi Field Marshal Goering decreed that all factories, farms and forest lands in Polish territory now incorporated in the Reich will be taken over and managed by the State. The order exempts property owned by German nationals before September 1, and does not apply to the Gouvernement General section of Poland which, though ruled by Berlin, has not been taken into the Reich. Thousands of Poles are being transported daily to labor in Germany. . . . Japanese admitted withdrawals in Kwangsi Province and in Inner Mongolia to their bases in those sections. The Chinese claimed they had driven the Nipponese back. In Tokyo, Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita declared that though his predecessor, Admiral Nomura, had promised to open the Yangtze River, he did not feel the pledge was binding on him. In the Diet, the suggestion was made that Japan donate 10,000,000 yen to American missionaries in China to induce them to aid in building up "the new order in the East." . . . The French Chamber of Deputies voted to allow seven ex-Communist deputies to continue as members, ousted sixty Red deputies who had not denounced Moscow. Police expelled 125 Communist municipal councilmen of towns around Paris. . . . Paraguay became a virtual dictatorship under its President José Felix Estigarribia. The Paraguayan Congress passed a bill calling for a Constituent Assembly to draw up a new Constitution a year from now and then resigned in a body. . . . In Cuba, former President Mario G. Menocal denounced Colonel Fulgencio Batista for legalizing the Communist party in Cuba. . . . In Chile, a commission appointed by President Aguirre reported that 10,000 to 12,000 Jews entered the country although only 5,167 applications for entrance had been granted. Bribery accounted for the balance, it was said.

DEVOUT CATHOLICS

IN the Encyclical *On Atheistic Communism*, Pius XI deplored "the empty pharisaic show" of men who profess to be Catholics, yet "are Catholics hardly more than in name." But since they pass as Catholics, and are often canonized by an undiscerning secular press as "devout Catholics," the uncritical can hardly be blamed when they draw some very curious conclusions. One of these conclusions is that, according to Catholic teaching, a Catholic, especially if he holds a political office, may violate the Ten Commandments as he pleases, provided that in advance of every violation, he recites the Apostles Creed.

Well instructed, as distinguished from "devout," Catholics deplore this conclusion. Still more do they deplore the conduct of men who hide their wickedness under the cloak of religion. They deplore hardly less the conduct of Catholics in political life who, in the words of Pius XI, "fulfil more or less faithfully the more essential obligations of the religion they boast of professing," yet are always at pains to minimize the teaching of the Church on such topics as education, marriage and religious "toleration." They do not deny the Faith, but since they are never eager to defend it, they often compromise it, and thus permit non-Catholics to form conclusions that are wholly at variance with the truth.

One such Catholic can create misconceptions of Catholic teaching which a dozen learned works cannot sweep away. All of us are more influenced by what we see than by what we are obliged to dig out of a book, and when the non-Catholic perceives that the "devout" Catholic acts as though all his transgressions were covered by an occasional appearance at the late Mass on Sunday, he is apt to take that Catholic as a living embodiment of the teachings of the Church. He will probably be surprised to learn that in the Encyclical quoted, Pius XI warns us that "state functionaries and all employees [of the state] are obliged in conscience to perform their duties faithfully and unselfishly, imitating the brilliant example of distinguished men of the past and of our day, who with unremitting labor sacrificed their all for the good of their country." Sacrifice is not the hallmark of the political office-holder, as we have known him in this country. But it ought to be the distinguishing mark of the Catholic elected by his fellow-citizens to serve them in public office.

Speaking in New York last week, Judge Matthew J. Troy remarked that when a Catholic "elevated to the bench or any other position" finds his religion "cumbersome," we may conclude that "there is something wrong with that man." He needs a few days at a house of retreats, but if he refuses that, we ought to heed Judge Troy's warning that "it is high time for the taxpayers to start checking up on him." For the Catholic who neglects his duties as a Catholic will in all likelihood become a negligent or corrupt public official, and a source of grievous scandal.

EDITO

SAINT JOSEPH

HIMSELF a workingman, Saint Joseph is one to whom all workers, and, in particular, all who have been seeking work in vain, can have recourse with confidence. Our Lord worked many miracles, but we do not read that He ever worked a miracle for Joseph. As head of the Holy Family, he cared for the Child Jesus, and for Mary, his espoused wife, not by the aid of heavenly interpositions, but by hard toil with the plane and the saw in a carpenter's shop. Saint Joseph knew the straits of the poor by actual trial. He will understand us when we beg him to help us in all our needs.

THE MACHINE AND

SOME years ago, it was announced that a machine for picking cotton had at last been perfected. But the inventors, it was added, proposed to introduce the machine by slow degrees to avoid, as far as possible, depriving workers in the cotton fields of their jobs. In the controversy which ensued, the machine itself was forgotten, and little has since been heard of it.

Labor leaders protested that the introduction of this machine would not only throw thousands of unskilled laborers out of work, but cause a revolution in the whole cotton industry. Their opponents observed that since this labor differed very little from slave labor, the machine might be counted as another Emancipation Proclamation. Were these laborers deprived of their sole means of subsistence, their distress would make the State authorities realize the fact that cotton grown by slave labor is not an asset. While it gives the State a certain revenue, it also fosters the growth of an underfed, illiterate, ill-housed, and often immoral, class of slaves.

Since this machine, if it ever existed, has apparently been kept off the market, this discussion is largely academic. But it gives point to an address made last week in Rochester by Dr. Karl T. Compton, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dr. Compton defends "technological progress" by resorting to the very arguments hitherto employed to attack it. He finds his evidence in statistics which show that in the eras of unusual technological progress, the percentage of the gain-

SPOILED YOUTH

WRITING of the delegates to the American Youth Congress, Walter Lippmann concludes that they were "shockingly ill-mannered, disrespectful, conceited, ungenerous, and spoiled." In addition, "they are hypnotized by Moscow." We agree that this indictment is justified, but it would be more profitable to know what has spoiled these young people. Are they simply the normal result of an educational system which omits, and consequently minimizes, religion and morals? Or is the Youth Congress still ruled by Moscow? Perhaps this second question might be answered by the Dies Committee.

AN UNEMPLOYMENT

fully employed has always shown a sharp increase. He admits, however, that usually the immediate effect is unemployment, and "undoubtedly efforts must be made to mitigate this."

It is futile to attempt to stem technological progress. As long as business is conducted for profit only, or for profit chiefly, men will welcome any invention which is calculated to reduce production and distribution costs. Unfortunately, they rarely evince an equal interest in the fate of the man who loses his job when the new method is introduced. Some of the unemployed will be gradually absorbed in other industries, but that is small comfort to the man who sees his family starving while he waits for another job. Here precisely, as Dr. Compton admits, is the human problem which we have neglected.

We can put no chains on human ingenuity. But conscience puts chains on all who profit by it. Legislation to stir the conscience of the employer who buys a machine which will deprive hundreds of workers of their employment would probably fail. Only a philosophy which is founded on religious conviction will urge him to make every effort to find new work for the displaced employes.

It will be objected that this solution is impracticable. The objection does nothing but supply further evidence in support of the truth that the evils of the industrial world can be cured only by a return to the precepts of the Gospel.

AS President Roosevelt said in his second "Fire Side Chat" (May 7, 1933), "we cannot ballyhoo ourselves into prosperity." During his first campaign, Mr. Roosevelt gave the voters some very wise advice. Apparently he had a definite policy in mind, and he proposed to enforce it to end the depression then in its third year. It was his intention to balance the budget, and to make the Government live within its income. Just as the credit of a family depends chiefly on living within its income, he said at Pittsburgh, on October 19, 1932, so too, "if the nation is living within its income, its credit is good," but when it "continues to pile up deficits, it is on the road to bankruptcy."

At that time, Mr. Roosevelt had no countenance for a theory of national economy which has since commended itself to leaders in his Administration. He in fact denounced the contention that since this is a rich country, all Federal expenditures are in reality an investment, backed by the Government's power to tax. For taxes, he observed, press most cruelly upon the poor. They "are paid in the sweat of every man who labors," even though he "may never see a tax bill." Men who labor pay taxes "in deductions from wages, in increased cost of what they buy, or, as now, in broad unemployment throughout the land." (October 19, 1932.) When the tax rates mount, "they are reflected in idle factories, in tax-sold farms, and in hordes of hungry people, tramping the streets, and seeking jobs in vain." (October 19, 1932.) Plainly, Mr. Roosevelt had no sympathy with the plan of tax, and tax, and tax again.

Continuing this line of attack upon the Republican Administration, Mr. Roosevelt found the leading cause of mounting deficits and increased taxation in the "unnecessary functions of government" initiated and fostered by President Hoover. President Hoover had "piled bureau on bureau, commission upon commission," and "bureaus and bureaucrats, commissions and commissioners have been retained at the expense of the taxpayers." Hence he felt he was within bounds when he accused "the present Administration of being the greatest spending Administration in peace times in all our history." (October 19, 1932.) Commercial credit was continually contracting, while the banks were forced to finance Federal deficits, and "this burden is absorbing their resources." This disorder "arises from one cause only, and that is the unbalanced budget, and the failure of this Administration to take effective steps to balance it." (October 19, 1932.)

What, then, could be done to correct these conditions, and to send the unemployed back to work? Mr. Roosevelt inveighed against "the habit of unthinking people to turn in times like this to the illusions of economic magic." It had been suggested that the problem could be solved by using Federal funds to finance large public works. Mr. Roosevelt found no solution in the magic of larger Federal expenditures. "It is clear," he said, "that even if

we could raise many billions of dollars, and find definitely public works to spend these billions on, even all that money would not give employment to the seven to ten million people who are out of work." True, expenditures might help, but only in the manner of a stopgap. "A real economic cure must go to the killing of the bacteria in the system rather than to the treatment of the external symptoms." (Radio address, April 7, 1932.)

The cure?

The beginning, at least, of the cure must be sought in immediate action to eliminate unnecessary and costly functions of government. "We are spending altogether too much money for services that are neither practical nor necessary." (September 29, 1932.) Hence, "we must eliminate . . . functions that are not definitely essential to the continuance of government . . . and, like the private citizen, give up luxuries we can no longer afford." (July 2, 1932.) Furthermore, it was necessary to act at once, and he asked the people to give him the mandate to act.

"CONFIDENCE"

PRESIDENT Roosevelt has acted, but not in the sense understood by the people who gave him the mandate he asked. We do not rehearse these views of Mr. Roosevelt as a foundation on which the futile charge of inconsistency may be raised.

Why, then, rake over old straw?

It is perhaps early to talk about party programs. Yet the conventions are only a few months away, and it seems to us that one or other of the parties could do far worse than incorporate Mr. Roosevelt's earlier views on the functions of government, and how they may be used to aid in ending the depression. For it is fairly obvious that working, now on this theory and now on that, and then on a combination of the two, mixed with a fifth theory, the Administration can today criticize itself for the very failures which Mr. Roosevelt found in the Hoover Administration.

It still remains true that whereas the wage-earner pays taxes in the sweat of his brow, and in the higher cost of commodities, taxes have been raised under the present Administration to meet the cost of multitudinous bureaus and agencies established since 1933. Today the worker's burden is not lighter, but more oppressive. It still remains true that while the only way of putting the unemployed back to work is to encourage industry to expand, the "from seven to ten millions tramping the streets, and seeking jobs in vain," have been augmented by two million others, still "seeking jobs in vain."

Such facts make us impatient with the theory recently expressed in New York by Secretary Ickes, that it is "a sin" to do anything that might undermine "confidence" in the Administration. The people gave this Administration its confidence in 1932, and again in 1936. It is now time to ask whether a further vote of confidence should be extended.

TWELVE BASKETS

OUR Lord has told us that man cannot live by bread alone. Man has needs that cannot be satisfied by anything which this world can offer. But He Who assumed our nature, was never unmindful of man's material needs, or physical weakness. On the night before His Passion, He excused the Apostles for falling asleep, instead of watching with Him and praying. "Take your rest," He said, as He turned back to the Garden alone. Indeed, much of the Gospel story is a narrative of how He fed the hungry, and cured the sick.

In the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint John, vi, 1-15) we read that to provide food for a hungry crowd, Our Lord worked one of His most astonishing miracles. A great multitude had followed Him, some "because they saw the miracles which he did on them that were diseased," but others, we may suppose, because they wished to hear more of His beautiful and consoling teachings. This supposition is not without reason, for Saint Mark relates that Our Lord had compassion on the multitude, since under the rule of the Pharisees, "they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things." But Jesus was mindful of their physical as well as of their spiritual hunger. "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" He asks Philip, who at once estimates the cost of a simple meal. Andrew, not very helpful, exclaims: "There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes: but what are these among so many?"

Our Lord "knew what he would do." At His command, the Apostles move among the people, bidding them sit down upon the grass. They watch Jesus as He blesses the loaves and the fishes. They receive from His Sacred Hands (so soon to be pierced for them) their portions, and begin to eat. Philip had thought that about \$34 would pay for a suitable meal for 5,000 men, besides the women and children, but Our Lord gave them food so appetizing that all ate until they were "filled." As at Cana, He invoked omnipotence to give the wedding guests the best wine, so here at His Divine command the little fishes and the barley loaves are changed and multiplied to provide a crowd of poor people with a sumptuous repast. Our Lord is always generous beyond measure.

It is not recorded that these people asked Our Lord to feed them. No mother came to tell Him that her little Isaac was crying because he was hungry. No prudent greybeard in the crowd suggested that if all these people were to be fed, Peter and Andrew, James and John, the Judas there with the money-bag, had better resolve themselves into a committee on ways and means. The suggestion about food for His hungry followers, came from Our Lord Himself.

We are not of more worth than this crowd, but if we are of lesser, then our need is greater. Our Lord gave to them without waiting to be asked. Surely, when we ask Him, with faith and confidence, to help us, He will give us all we need, and as of old, what is left over will fill twelve baskets.

CORRESPONDENCE

NEGRO MISSIONS

EDITOR: I have just read once more John J. O'Connor's article, *All Along the Home Front There Sound Cries for Help* (AMERICA, December 30). It is an excellent article and a timely one on the Home Missions.

However, I must confess that I am a bit puzzled as to why, in enumerating various societies of priests laboring in the Negro missions of the United States, all mention of the Society of the Divine Word was omitted. I realize that the enumeration was not intended to be exhaustive, and that the author merely wanted to mention a few of the representative orders of priests working for the conversion of the Negro, but even then the work of the Divine Word Fathers for the colored is such that only lack of information concerning it would explain the author's not including them in any list of front-line workers in the colored missions. To supply this information, at least in part, is my reason for writing.

The Society of the Divine Word entered the colored work in 1905, and today it has fifty priests and twelve Brothers engaged in the Negro apostolate in Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and California. These have charge of twenty-three parishes, missions and mission stations and take care of over 14,000 colored Catholics. In the twenty schools there are 120 Sisters, 19 lay teachers and 5,500 pupils.

But the crowning achievement of the Divine Word Fathers and the one thing which, more than anything else, has earned for them a place in the front ranks of the home missions is the fact that they have built, own and conduct St. Augustine's Seminary, Bay St. Louis, Miss., the first and only Negro Catholic seminary in America. In the twenty years of its existence, this seminary has given to Catholic America twelve colored priests, of whom eleven were ordained as full-fledged members of the Society of the Divine Word and one as a secular. Of these twelve, one is dead, one is doing missionary work in British Honduras, two are in the missions of Africa, and the remainder, eight, are laboring for souls right here at home. That means that two-thirds of the Negro priests in the United States at this moment are alumni of St. Augustine's. Besides this, the seminary has today fifty-three students preparing themselves for the holy priesthood, and a class of four to be ordained next year.

I write this in no spirit of braggadocio but just to keep the record straight and to give information on what is being done in this much-neglected field.

It is true that the Divine Word Fathers, as well as all the other Fathers on the Negro missions, are working for God and not to gain the applause of the

world. But the Divine Model of all missionaries admonishes us: "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Therefore I offer this bit of "light" with the hope that it will shine its way straight to the hearts of our American Catholics and awaken in them such a lively interest in the conversion of the American Negro that, seeing the good works of the Negro apostolate, each Catholic, black as well as white, may take it upon himself to glorify God by praying for, and helping in, its ultimate success.

Techny, Ill.

CLARENCE J. HOWARD, S.V.D.

UNCLE JOHN OF SANTA MONICA

EDITOR: When Uncle John read that letter about himself in AMERICA, (December 30) he promptly got the "fat-head." Several of the old, retired architects and bankers that he chums with down at the park "Senate" came to the house to congratulate him. You see, he has been able to get them interested in reading AMERICA weekly. Around the house, when anyone tells him what to do, he strokes those Santa Claus whiskers and says quite emphatically: "And when did you ever have anything printed in AMERICA?"

There is no living with him now. He keeps going back to that one letter you printed about him and holds it up as a sort of "did you ever have anything like that happen to you?" If you can't prove your point by something in AMERICA, I'm afraid your point goes unproven. So, at least, Uncle John thinks. His arguments were so good when he discussed current topics with these old boys that they finally asked him where he kept getting them. He has to read AMERICA pretty fast the first day it comes out if he expects to beat them, because a good many of them have started subscribing just for this reason. . . .

EDITOR: This is the last notation on Uncle John. He died a holy death last week, at the solemn age of ninety-five. The hardships and virility of his life in early Nevada and California kept him agile in both body and mind till the very last.

He was a great booster for AMERICA. It was his weekly bible; regularly, he would pore over your Comment column, and for the rest of the issue, he would analyze each article with a huge magnifying glass (he lost the sight of his right eye when playing soccer in Ireland as a boy). During the present war, and all through the Spanish crisis, he felt that the only news source he could trust as absolutely reliable was your page of Chronicle. Few of your readers, I imagine, limit themselves so exclusively as did Uncle John to your worthy publication.

Besides making it a yardstick, he made AMERICA his exclusive textbook. Atheist and Communist friends whom he knew and argued with, as they sat together down at the park, can attest to this.

Your letter, "appointing him our special representative," made him very happy. There is a grand chance that he'll go on representing you in Heaven just as soon as he gets accustomed to what he would call "my new field of operations."

Alma, Calif.

JOHN E. ODOU

BACK DOOR

EDITOR: The fetish for economy popular for the moment in Washington could be translated into an actual benefit by placing guards at the back door to the budget as well as at the front. The back door is called "deficiency appropriation" and is usually opened during the sweltering days of mid-summer. Through it, the Government seems to become morally obligated to pay debts illegally incurred by some officials spending more than is allotted to them by others charged with responsibility for preventing profligacy.

Safeguards against such practices were enacted into local laws here and elsewhere long ago. More than a quarter of a century ago, any local official who even unwittingly tried to spend more for the Government than it had authorized would have found himself exceedingly embarrassed. Appropriations expire automatically at the end of a specified time. They are not permitted to accumulate as in Washington, where they appear to be a leap-year dowry.

New York, N. Y.

HENRY V. MORAN

NO HYPERSENSITIVENESS

EDITOR: When I read the review of *Juno and the Paycock* (February 10), I thought of the last words of the drunken Paycock to his drunken buddy: "I'm telling you . . . Joxer . . . th' whole worl's . . . in a terr . . . ible state o' . . . chassis!" I was thinking, of course, of the world of contemporary dramatic criticism.

Intelligent Irishmen object to such plays as "*Juno and the Paycock*," not because there are "some unpleasant types in these plays," but because all the types are unpleasant and all the personalities worthless or futile. And their chief objection is that these plays are presented by an Irish National Theatre that professes to fulfil the promise made by Lady Gregory and Yeats in the Manifesto issued when they were trying to collect funds: "We will show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and of easy sentiment, as it has been represented, but the home of an ancient idealism." What idealism, ancient or new, is dramatized in *Juno and the Paycock*? And, surely, anyone who has listened to the guffawing of an American audience during the revolting scene of drunkenness with which the play ends, must realize that there are still many among us who consider Ireland "the home of buffoonery," and drunken buffoonery, at that!

But that final scene in O'Casey's play is not meant to be funny. If the audience would moderate

its loud guffawing and listen to the two drunken wastrels as they flounder and fall about the stage, they would hear their mumbled, disconnected allusions to Irish ideals, Easter Week, 1916, and the chaotic state of the world in general. But even without hearing these lines it would seem impossible that any audience or dramatic critic could miss the atmosphere of indescribable cynicism and disillusionment created by the mere entrance and antics of those two drunken sots, after the dramatic pause that follows Juno's prayer and exit. It is to this that certain Irishmen object—those with intelligence to know what is O'Casey's philosophy of life and with intelligence to recognize it even when it is presented by two hopeless drunkards.

Some of us with Irish blood in our veins felt the sore need of some sort of uplift after the disaster of *Kindred*, as Miss Jordan remarks. But besides Irish blood in our veins, some of us have Irish love in our hearts, Irish thoughts in our heads and Irish instincts in our souls, and we experience no uplift in the presence of the devouring cynicism of Sean O'Casey. New York audiences attending *Juno and the Paycock* may be, as Miss Jordan describes them, "large" and "enthusiastic" but they do not include "countless loyal Irish men and Irish women who are lending themselves whole-heartedly to the appeal of this powerful play." Loyal Irish men and Irish women are not ignorant. They are too discerning to miss the real message of this play, and too intelligent to be annoyed when their well-founded objections to it are met by remarks about their hypersensitiveness.

Boston, Mass.

TERENCE L. CONNOLLY, S.J.

A COLD, STARK VIEW

EDITOR: I do not deny that everything M. Gilson has said about Hitler is gospel true. But, after all is said and done, the sad, cold, stark fact remains that it was the terms of settlement imposed by France and England upon Germany that laid the groundwork for the rise of Hitler.

Had there been a little more of the "love of God" in the hearts of the terms makers, or when the scuttling was done, had they the foresight to occupy the land in numbers sufficient to see that their terms, at least as to armament, etc., were being carried out, there would have been no room for the rise of this nightmare to them. So that, deplorable and menacing though he be, he is still the problem of France and England.

Louisville, Ky.

V. R.

PHOENIX, NOT DODO

EDITOR: I merely wish to express a word of appreciation for the interesting and enlightening article on the Ku Klux Klan by Brendan Byrne in your February 10 issue. Few people realize the potential strength and danger of the Klan. Many of us think that the KKK is as extinct as the proverbial dodo bird. Such information as contained in this article, however, will do much to keep us on the alert.

New York, N. Y.

JOSEPH C. DRISCOLL

LITERATURE AND ARTS

BALMY BREEZES BLOWN FROM BANGOR

RAYMOND A. GRADY

DYOPRUNIDA!

EVER since I left school. I have refused to use a dictionary except on compulsion. It was not that I distrusted the book, but because of a fault of my own. For I never can remember the word I intended to look up. I open the dictionary, find myself fascinated by another word, and before I can break the spell, I have gotten lost among the eye-compellers, and I have forgotten the word concerning which I first wanted information.

Lately, I have another reason for not using the dictionary and, after a very sad experience, I have now taken a vow never to look at one of the things again. I have had my fill. If I live and die ignorant of the meanings of words, it will be all right with me.

For, today I had occasion to look up the meaning of the word *dyne*. By writing the word down on a slip of paper, I knew I was safe. Wherever I might roam, I could always know, by looking at the slip of paper, that *dyne* was what I had in mind. The word was on a page which I had never consulted before; and at once I was struck by a lot of words which I had never seen nor heard tell of, but which seemed to exist in spite of that.

And the definitions of those words left me baffled; even now I mutter to myself. A man wanting information, I find, would better go to some other source, because the dictionary is deficient in what he wants.

The very first word I saw when I opened that book was *dynastidae*. And I claim that words like that are all too scarce in the English language, and should be fostered when met. After conning its contours and trying out the three or four possible pronunciations of it, rolling it over my tongue, sort of, I looked at the definition. I give it for what it is worth to you: "Dynastidae, n. pl. Entom. a family of lamellicorn beetles, now united with Scarabaeidae including the Hercules beetle."

Of course that does, in a way, define the word. The reader does know that it is a beetle of some sort, and that through interbreeding, or perhaps a mesalliance, it is now practically a Scarabaeida, and that the Hercules beetle meets it on friendly terms. Aside from a vague wonder as to that "lamellicorn" feature, and the doubt as to what a

Scarabaeida might be, I cannot really complain about that definition. So I glanced around a bit, not yet permanently soured.

The next word I found was *Dyscrasite*. It was defined as "n. Mineral. A silvery-white opaque silver antimonid (Ag₃Sb) found massive and in orthorhombic crystals." Right there I began to ask myself if the game were worth the candle. All the definition tells us of the stuff is that it is silver-white, that it is a mineral, and that it is opaque. Beyond that, what? Antimonid? Yes, but what is antimonid? And "found massive and in orthorhombic crystals." What does that mean to you? Exactly. You get the idea. But don't be in too much of a hurry to agree with me. Look at my next find.

Dyoprunida! Yes, sir, *dyoprunida*. I asked myself who was I that such a beautiful word should be reserved for my eye. I pictured myself using it in heated debate to intimidate an opponent. "Listen, you dyoprunida," I would shout, and he would be revealed in all his shamelessness. His mouth would fall ajar, his eyes would go akimbo on him and he would be dumb. I would have him, fast bound to my chariot wheels. But I doubt if I can make use of the word.

For the definition is as follows: "Dyoprunida. n. pl. Protoz. A division of prunoidean radiolaria with the shell bilocular." You can put your finger right on the flaw there, I am sure. I can see you saying to yourself: "Very good, but what is a radiolaria, particularly a radiolaria with the shell bilocular?" Why does not the dictionary come right out like a man and say: "This thing is an oyster (turtle, nut, projectile) and is a good deal like all the rest of its kind."

But the dictionary does not do that. It retires into its bilocular shell and leaves only a trace of prunoidean radiolaria behind it, from which I am supposed to reconstruct the critter (mineral, vegetable).

Of course, it is possible to look up the word *bilocular*. But I have had experiences with looking up words, and it is no use. It would simply say, "see: 'shell'." Or it would actually define the word, which is even worse.

In case you are one of those earnest persons who want to get to the bottom of everything, do not bother with this one. For the definition is almost

certain to be "bilocular—adj. Protoz. a biscayneous anivolvuloidean A₂BL²." And where would that leave you?

It is a far, far better thing not to let it get into your mind at all. Because you might be one of those who like to make definitions. In the case of *orthorhombic* for instance, you would say to yourself: "Let's see, now. *Ortho* comes from the Greek *orthos*, meaning 'straight' or 'direct.' And I'll bet 'orthodox' comes from that, too. Now let's look at the hind end. *Rhombic*. Well, rhombus is an equilateral parallelogram having oblique angles. So *orthorhombic* would mean a direct, or straight . . . hum . . . no."

And the next thing you would be insisting your name is Christopher Columbus, and people would be humoring you. People in white coats.

It does seem to me that there is a wide field for a dictionary that will define words without getting pyrotechnical about it. It should not be necessary to drag in chemical formulae and differential calculus in order to say that molasses, for instance, is a sweet, gooey syrup made out of sugar cane; that it is a brownish color and can be eaten on waffles with some satisfaction.

Can we not have, Mr. Webster, Mr. Funk-Wagnalls and Mr. International, a meeting of the minds here? Or have you in the back of your foul minds, a plan to issue a "dictionary companion" which it will be necessary for people to buy in order to understand your dictionaries?

PATRICK HENRY SPEAKS—1939

Mr. LEE: Mr. President, I yield four minutes to the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry). (Applause.)

The PRESIDENT: The Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) is recognized for four minutes.

Mr. HENRY: Mr. President it is natural to man. . . .

Mr. ABERCROMBIE: Mr. President, I make the point of order that there is no quorum present.

The PRESIDENT: The Chair will count. (Counting) 398 members are present, a quorum. The Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) will continue.

Mr. HENRY: Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge. . . .

Mr. SMOTH: Mr. President, I object. The Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) may indulge if he wishes, but it is unfair to state that every man indulges. Is he trying to make us ALL out sots? I think. . . .

Mr. HENRY: . . . in Hope;—er, that is,—ha, in the illusions of Hope. . . .

Mr. WILKIE: Will the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) yield just there?

Mr. HENRY: I refuse to yield.

Mr. WILKIE: Who does the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) think he is, Hitler? (Shouts and catcalls.)

Mr. HENRY: We are apt to shut our eyes. . . .

Mr. BORGO: WHO is apt to shut his eyes? I was only leaning back in my chair. It is none of the Gentleman's business if I DO shut my eyes. His

speeches, as we know, would put anybody to sleep. Mr. HENRY: . . . against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren, 'till she transforms us into. . . .

Mr. GLAM: I make the point of order, Mr. President, that the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) is not discussing the bill. I think he should discuss the bill.

The PRESIDENT: The Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) will confine his remarks to the bill under discussion.

Mr. HENRY: . . . beasts.

Mr. BORGO: There he goes again. Mr. President, it is too much. I refuse to sit passive here and listen to these insults. First he says I am asleep, and now he calls me a beast. And my colleague (Mr. Smoth) just informs me that a few minutes ago the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) called him a sot. I would like to know whether the minority has any rights in debate at all?

The PRESIDENT: The Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) will proceed in order, and choose his language a little more carefully.

Mr. HENRY: Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle. . . .

Mr. WALDTEUFEL: Mr. President, I demand the words be taken down. The Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) has just made a statement derogatory to my race. He said that this is a Jewish struggle. Is George Washington a Jew? Is Sam Adams . . . well JOHN Adams, a Jew? Is Benjam. . . . Thomas Jefferson a Jew, I suppose?

Mr. HENRY: . . . for liberty. Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not. . . .

Mr. BORGO: Mr. President. Mr. President. . . .

Mr. HENRY (hurriedly): . . . the things which so nearly concern our temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost. . . .

Mr. ABERCROMBIE: Has the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) the figures there? I don't think we should continue this spending orgy. . . .

Mr. HENRY: I am willing to know the whole truth, to know the worst, and to provide for it!

Mr. ABERCROMBIE: Then you are one of those who endorse this spending program, I take it? Will you, then, go back to your constituents and tell them that you flung money—their money—right and left. . . .

Mr. HENRY: I have but one lamp, by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging the future but by the past.

The PRESIDENT: The time of the Gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Henry) has expired.

Mr. HENRY: Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to continue for five minutes more.

Mr. BORGO, Mr. SMOTH, Mr. ABERCROMBIE: I object.

The PRESIDENT: Objection is heard.

Mr. HENRY: Mr. President, I ask leave to revise and extend my remarks in the Record.

The PRESIDENT: Without objection permission is granted. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

BOOKS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GALLANT FINNS

FINLAND: LAND OF HEROES. By Toivo Rosvall. E. P. Dutton and Co. \$2.50

AN American citizen of Finnish parentage, Mr. Rosvall toured the country in the summer of 1939, explored ancient Turku, modern Helsinki and other important cities, and devoted some time to literary and historical research. His general attitude is flippant and pagan. He seems far more interested in Finland's past—in the *Kalevala*, for example—than in Finland's immediate future. Contemporary achievements are minimized. Although at the time of his visit a great many civilians were spending two weeks or more digging trenches at the Karelian frontier, he does not mention the army and utterly fails to catch the spirit of the people on the eve of the Russian conflict. He was informed that foreigners owned all the rich factories, that the Finnish worker was paid nine cents an hour, and that butter cost thirty cents a pound. These reports are neither affirmed nor denied. If the reader expects a realistic survey of the country and its people, he will be disappointed. But the book will suffice as a brief, superficial, impressionistic introduction to Europe's most northern republic.

Someone has suggested that if a Russian, a Swede and a Finn were placed in a stony field and told to go to work, the Russian would sing and pretend to work half the day; the Swede would mutter and work until the afternoon; the Finn would look stolidly at the field and work hard until dusk. And the Russian would have accomplished nothing, the Swede would have cleared away the smaller rocks, while the Finn would have spent his day carrying away all the big stones from the field.

This is true of all walks of Finnish life. The Finn is a hard-working individualist who sought the solitude of the forest. The forest, in turn, has made him gloomy, mystical, fatalistic, suspicious. Centuries ago the Finnish people realized that they were not Swedes. They did not want to become Russians. So they tried hard, despite oppression and enslavement, to be Finns. Self-reliant, strong, determined that they will either get the best of life or death, the Finns today are engaged in a desperate struggle with an ancient and more powerful enemy. This reviewer joins with the author, and the publisher, in expressing the hope that he has not written an *In Memoriam* of a gallant little country.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR

IN PRAISE OF THE AUTHOR'S NATIVE WALES

HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY. By Richard Llewellyn. The Macmillan Co. \$2.75

WITH a single reservation, this is an excellent book. It is written with a degree of poetic sensitivity to moods, to the atmosphere of a time long past and the loveliness of external nature, that has been missing for some time from the tone of the contemporary novel. And very few modern novels have had the swiftness of movement of this book. It has no particular formal plot, but it has artistic form in the true meaning of that term. Our friends of the Left-wing will probably not like it because it has no "tendency"; its characters are very well aware of economic evils but they refuse to submit their

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SHEED AND WARD'S CORNER



AETARE Sunday is nearly here, thank goodness, and if we have done penance nicely, let's celebrate it—with, for choice, Father Leonard Feeney's **YOU'D BETTER COME QUIETLY** (\$2.00), the

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intellects to the dominance of the mob-mind and they have the intelligent man's attitude of skepticism toward panaceas. In many ways, this is a very Christian book, for its characters are not ashamed to have consciences and souls. On the other hand, there are in it one or two pages of rather embarrassing animality, the justification whereof is difficult to discover.

It tells the story of the childhood and youth of Huw Morgan who grew up in a Welsh mining village, some forty or fifty years ago. He recalls his childhood in the golden age before the creeping slag heap had crushed out the green beauty of the valley; he remembers his father and his brothers coming up the hill to throw their week's wages jingling into his mother's lap as she sat beside the door of their house; this she did in company with all the women of the village, and the week's wages were in shining, golden sovereigns. The Morgans lived liberally and well; their table was heavy with good things and yet the prudent mother kept a jar-full of their savings against the bad days that unhappily came.

The Morgans were no harsh, illiterate clowns either; there was music in their house and good conversation and an appreciation of the better things that had been written in the alien, English tongue. Huw's father taught him to be a Christian, but he taught him also how to fight when needs be; and he taught him a fierce pride in his heritage of a Welsh culture that was old when the Romans came. Gwilyn Morgan, the father, and his wife Beth will stick in the reader's memory.

As the boy Huw grows older, the entire atmosphere changes with rare subtlety. Life becomes more difficult, and tragedy enters into it. His brothers grow away from him and the family. They marry, die, move afar off, grow bitter and estranged. Huw suffers at school, falls in and out of love. His father has been made superintendent of the mine and gets little or no peace from his advancement. Wages fall and there are strikes. The slag heap pushes further and further; it hangs behind Morgan's house like a living thing, a great, sluggish leviathan that will swallow them up in the end.

This is not the place to detail the incidents of Mr. Llewellyn's novel. It has strength and movement right up to the very last page where Huw is prepared to leave the valley and go off into the world. His father has been crushed in a fall of coal in the mine, the slag heap has banked up behind their house and warped it out of shape and there is the logical end. The story of the valley is ended. Through the course of its telling, there has been some beautiful writing; the salt and poetry of the Welsh speech, the gravity and dignity of their lives, the simplicity of their beliefs, the blend of passion and puritanism that makes up the Welsh temperament. *How Green Was My Valley* is no mere, manufactured story; it is at once a poem, a sermon and a panegyric in praise of the author's native land. J. G. E. HOPKINS

FOR ECONOMICS SUBSTITUTE SOCIALISM

ECONOMICS FOR THE MILLIONS. By Henry Pratt Fairchild. Modern Age Books, Inc. \$2.50

TO THE reader unacquainted with the writings of Professor Fairchild of New York University, who is also President of the Town Hall Club, the title will seem clever and attractive. "Ah!" he will exclaim: "another book in the manner of Belloc's *Economics for Helen* to throw light on the dismal science." Then, opening the book he will consult the preface. There is no preface. "How original," he will say: "the title is the preface. At last, a foreword shorter than an epigram; subject and treatment revealed in four words."

Beginning to read he will find much that is orthodox, amid a growing number of statements the accuracy of which he will challenge. For example, he will be told

that "value" exists solely in the minds of men. "Why, this sounds like Mother Eddy," he will mutter, and pass on. Now the captions are no longer expository, but condemnatory. "The Fallacy of Profits; the Futility of Credit; Phantom Riches"; until at last appears, "The Remedy, Socialization," and the purpose of the book stands revealed.

It were more aptly named, "Socialism for the Millions." And so, the word "Economics" is used as a screen to hide the old approach to Socialism. Not a word about the history of long-forgotten socialistic experiments of the past, no mention of Marx. There follow the usual arguments and the inevitable hint of Utopia. In the chapter on "Liberty" which is really a plea for the surrender of liberty, there occurs this bracing assurance to the timid among us who are prone to associate Socialism with Marx and Stalin and Russia: "Neither Socialism nor Communism involves any interference with freedom and liberty outside of economic relationships." Cooperatives the author considers as a limited form of Socialism and as a preparation for Collectivism. The statement is not new, or true, at least in Nova Scotia.

The Catholic has ever opposed genuine Socialism, among other reasons, because, "The right to possess private property is derived from nature, not from man; and the state has by no means the right to abolish it, but only to control its use and bring it into harmony with the interests of the public good." (*Rerum Novarum*.) Why not first study Corporatism before putting the commissar over industry? Corporatism has brought to little Portugal prosperity and a balanced budget. Recently, she placed here an order for steel totaling \$15,000,000.

GEORGE T. EBERLE

FROM A LENS THAT IS DISTORTED

MEDIEVAL PANORAMA. By G. G. Coulton. The Macmillan Co. \$4

ONE might walk up and down the back alleys of Chicago, or of dear old London, with a candid camera, snapping ash cans, mud holes and a thousand other eyesores. Every picture would possess photographic truth. But if the pictures were assembled and the collection labeled "London," would this be the reality we know? Or again, a thousand years from now some enterprising student may unearth the reports of a sanitary commission, a vice squad or a reform league to reveal what life in any one of our great cities was like. Some such service Mr. Coulton does for those who read his books on the Middle Ages. No one doubts the immense erudition of the octogenarian scholar with a remarkable nose for the malodorous in medieval records. One can admit his sincerity and his desire to tell the truth as he sees it, and still be slow to recommend his writings without much reservation.

Mr. Coulton is, what no historian should be, a special pleader. He has constituted himself the prosecutor of the Catholic Middle Ages. And like a certain type of prosecuting attorney he is out to smirch the character of his victim. He has a thesis the proving of which requires a clever presenting of plausible evidence. And Mr. Coulton is undeniably clever, and at the same time very entertaining. The "inexactitudes of Coulton" have been exposed at some length by the late Father Herbert Thurston. We would not insist upon this point. Rather it is the spirit behind his presentation that makes him dangerous to the unwary. The mature student can read him with profit, and not a little pleasure. To the general reader he will do more harm than good.

If this reads like a review of the author and not of his book, we hope the reason is clear enough. At this distance from the sources we have only the pontifical authority of G. G. Coulton for many of his statements. But

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we have in his own writings ample evidence for a judgment on the man himself. If it seems unkind to find fault with an old man, our only answer must be that he has richly deserved and still deserves harsh criticism. On more than one occasion he had, in fact, shown himself an insufferable boor. So much so that his impatience under criticism has been ascribed, we should say charitably, to neurasthenia. He writes in a passion, colorfully, eloquently, and his repertoire of vituperatives is astounding.

Medieval Panorama is a worm's eye view of "The English Scene from the Conquest to the Reformation." There is not a dull page in the book. From official documents and popular literature a thousand arresting details are gathered with, let us say, a fairly high average for accuracy. But the whole story is, we feel sure, misleading, though perhaps not intentionally so. Some three years ago we were discussing Mr. Coulton with a prominent medievalist. This was the medievalist's summary. Coulton does not write history; he merely assembles a mass of materials; but his materials are distorted and out of focus; so, what have you? Of course, we are quoting from memory. But the comment was so strikingly phrased that it was easy to retain substantially. Nor have we the shadow of a doubt as to the competence of the man we are quoting. We are doubly reassured by the attitude of F. M. Powicke and Herbert Thurston, two English historians who are among those best able to appreciate G. G. Coulton, and to analyze his peculiar bias.

RAYMOND CORRIGAN

BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

THE ALL-AMERICAN FRONT. By Duncan Aikman. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$3

FOR a fairly accurate view of the relationship between the United States and the South and Central American republics, Mr. Aikman gives a rather complete picture in his graphically written *The All-American Front*. The problems to be met and the seemingly insurmountable obstacles that lay in the path of our Government's "Good-Neighbor" policy are set forth with a clarity and sureness that clearly indicate the author's grasp of the situation. His historical references are correct on the whole, except for the fact that his assertions are, at times, too unqualified, too all-embracing. Generalizations from particular incidents smack of American journalese.

One is fascinated with the sprightly style and by the bold panoramic strokes that make this picture of Latin America most interesting, even absorbing. Intimate glimpses of the social and political structure of these peoples are, it is true, none too flattering, but the author is equally, if not more devastating in his caustic treatment of his fellow countrymen, who sojourn temporarily in these countries. He is possibly at his best when describing the intricate machinery of Latin American politics, which would appear to be more complicated than the mechanism of the Zacatapec sugar refinery.

Though Mr. Aikman has trained his binoculars on Latin America to give us a close-up view, one notices that his focus is more than slightly "Leftist," which obviously colors his objectivity. He sees plainly all Fascist tendencies, and rightly evaluates them. He appears, however, to have observed little, if any, Communist influence, not even in Mexico's Cárdenas. Some of the movements in individual countries, which he characterizes as Liberal, were not so dignified by more profound observers who lived through the crises that brought these movements into being and power. His references to Salazar's cooperative set-up in Portugal point clearly that he does not understand it, and as to Nationalist Spain he is at pains to show his dislike of the Franco movement, which he labels "a Hitler appendage."

With these reservations in mind, the reader will find

The *All-American Front* a thoroughly enjoyable introduction to Latin America, with its customs, standards of living, outlook on life. The author does not pretend to give the key to the problem's solution. But he does, possibly, point the way when he urges a patient, persistent, honest good-neighborliness in our dealings with these countries.

ALBERT WHELAN

RIVER OF EARTH. By James Still. The Viking Press. \$2.50

IF there is a grain of autobiographical truth in James Still's first novel, *River of Earth*, then one may well subscribe to the doctrine that one half of the world knows very little about the life of the remaining half. The hardships, poverty and suffering described in this volume, though sketched with a sense of the real, are drawn with so sympathetic a hand that one naturally associates them with the life of their author. They are almost too real to have been entirely formulated in the author's imagination.

The characters who people this interesting story lead their stark, humdrum lives in the coal-mining districts of Kentucky. It is the Baldridge family which absorbs most of our attention as we hear of their varying vicissitudes through the narrative of a seven-year-old son. It is a simple tale told in simple language, and with the rude accents of an isolated people. Always there is a homely dignity both in subject and in treatment, as the narrative spins itself out. There is no plot, no complication, merely the struggle of a family for a sparse, though satisfying, living. Woven into the grim reality of the story are bits of humor, family pleasantries, snatches of the more intimate moments of simple family life, pictures of people who, despite their meager fare, could find amusement in the fact that they had buttermilk mustaches after meals, and who in the midst of possible tragedy could dismiss rumors with the remark: "Oh, never'd I trust a man's sight Saturday after dark."

River of Earth is a picture of the life of the poor with its comedy and tragedy, its struggle and release. It has the strength of early ballads, a force that soars free of the trappings of adornment. No more authentically sincere work has been written, perhaps I should say, could be written. One cannot but feel that a strong whiff of factual truth blows through its pages.

JOSEPH R. N. MAXWELL

HEROIC DUST. By Theodora Dehon. The Macmillan Co. \$2.50

THIS novel is recommended to all. It is especially recommended to those who are at once students of literature and students of history. It is a story of the French Revolution and of the wars of the Chouannerie as they so terribly affected that little kingdom within a kingdom at the castle of Boisdésert, with its people, its rulers, its village, its church set deep in the forests of Normandy. We begin as the church bell tolls on the June evening of 1792, and the lives of Louis-Auguste and Alexandrine, the protagonists, are portrayed for us against their historical background until they reach their climax. Substantially, the story actually happened, and the basis of it is made mostly from tradition and some documents carefully selected and woven into the narration. The fiction element is blended beautifully with the factual, the result being a solid, poetic style and a full-of-interest, significantly holy story.

Some deep students, who claim unbiased opinion, wonder at the publication of such a novel at this particular time. But it seems that all fears of this book's being propaganda, permissively for Catholicism and ostensibly for France, are allayed by a careful reading which does not disclose anything but a splendid story splendidly told for its own sake.

Theodora Dehon, Franco-American, has lived and labored among the very descendants of those of whom she writes. At present-day Boisdésert she has gathered her materials. So many reviews, great and small, have praised her work it seems hardly necessary to praise it anew.

THOMAS B. FEENEY

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TWO FOR THE SHOW. The wife of one of our best-known dramatic critics of the past once confided to me that her husband was never happy at the first night of a good stage offering. After three minutes of an auspicious beginning gloom began to envelop him; he sagged in his seat, and as the interest of the play mounted he was given over to black melancholy. If, however, the play began and developed weakly his lounging figure straightened, his eyes flashed, and his face was alight with interest. The explanation of these phenomena was always the same. "I can be funny tomorrow morning," he unctuously whispered to her.

Let us admit at once that he would have been quite happy during the first few scenes of *Two for the Show*, the new revue at the Booth Theatre. There is no question that it began laggingly and that pessimists in the audience shook their heads and told one another it was not an equal to its delightful predecessor, *One for the Money*.

But its lagging was merely a question of a slow beginning. Its author, Miss Nancy Hamilton, took her time in getting under way. Once she was fairly started, however, there was no more excuse for head shakes and glazing eyes in the audience. For the second performance, the places of certain numbers were changed on the program. That was an improvement but it was not enough. For the sake of the program as a whole those numbers should be dropped. They certainly could be spared, for they are very dull, and the program as it stands at this writing is almost half an hour too long. In the dropping, I, personally, would include *Out of This World*—a number which is unpardonable. It does not belong. *Two for the Show* makes a few excursions close to the edge of bad taste, but the great majority of its features are clean and charming and much of the music by Morgan Lewis is delightful.

Nothing more amusing than Richard Haydn's monologs can be found in any of our theatres this season. The same tribute can be offered to Eve Arden and Keenan Wynn for their perfect team-work in *Painless Distraction*—which proves that even yet scenes in a dentist's chair can be made excruciatingly funny. At *Last It's Love* gives us make-believe singers and dancers in a make-believe ballroom, and the *Song of Spain* allows Brenda Forbes to be funny without being vulgar, which she grasps as if she liked it. *A Fool for Luck* gives almost a dozen young singers and dancers a chance to show their skill and pep, and they do it to perfection. But long before this the show is going with a fine swing and rush to its effective climax, *Good Night, Mrs. Astor*, sung by the entire company.

Did I say that Gertrude Macy and Stanley Gilkey are the producers, and that the entire stage production is "devised, staged and lighted" by John Murray Anderson? Raoul Pene Du Bois designed the scenery and costumes. It is undoubtedly the inspiration and experience of Anderson and Du Bois which have eliminated from the new show any suggestion of the amateurish atmosphere that occasionally appeared in *One for the Money*.

With a little more careful editing, *Two for the Show* will settle down among us for a good run.

GENEVA. Mr. Bernard Shaw also needed some careful editing in his latest offering, *Geneva*, so briefly presented by Gilbert Miller at Henry Miller's Theatre. Mr. Shaw had a great deal to say about the present world situation and said most of it in this play, which was a great mistake. He has always talked too much and the habit seems to be developing in him. *Geneva* could be worked over into an interesting lecture, though we would miss Herr Hitler's smashing costume, which was the one bit of real color in the play.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

DR. EHRLICH'S MAGIC BULLET. In method and in spirit, this film biography is reminiscent of *Louis Pasteur*. William Dieterle has again composed a peculiarly dramatic product from the laboratory adventures of a research scientist, but the interests of this pioneer are so grim with unpleasant association as to remove the picture from the scope of casual entertainment. It is frankly clinical in mood and incident, and Paul Ehrlich's climactic discovery of a treatment for social disease is discussed with an almost belligerent baldness. The spectator is dared to ask for reticence under pain of being pronounced criminally prudish. But the common fault of all such well-intentioned documents is that small attempt is made to equate moral and purely scientific values. Even when Ehrlich, on his deathbed, warns that diseases of the body feed upon diseases of the soul, the truth is vitiated by his specific reference to greed and hate, not to the particular evil which his own scientific inquiry inexorably connotes. There is perhaps too much emphasis placed on the "innocent" ways in which the disease may be contracted, with no reference at all to the most common source of contagion, and the film's air of scientific optimism about its control can be fatally misleading. All in all, this should be a *reserved production*. It can have only a *sinister or no meaning at all to the immature*, and its effect on adults is generally unpredictable. Edward G. Robinson's portrayal of Ehrlich is remarkably genuine, and he is supported by Ruth Gordon, Otto Kruger and Albert Basserman. (Warner)

VIGIL IN THE NIGHT. Dr. A. J. Cronin's position as the Jeremiah of the English hospital system is secured by this second acid commentary, this time from the nurse's point of view. It is what is popularly known as a searing indictment of the commercial instinct in medicine, and paints a sorry picture of the position of surgeons in the nation of shopkeepers. It manages, nevertheless, to be gripping entertainment in a harsh, humorless vein, less balanced than *The Citadel* but swept along by its fine fury. A nurse who assumes blame for her younger sister's negligence, resulting in the death of a child patient, keeps one step ahead of her reputation while fighting the nurses' battle for improved conditions. She is abetted by a crusading physician, and a bus accident, involving many children, gives their skillful heroism full play. Director George Stevens has kept Dr. Cronin's objective in mind constantly and, as a result, has slightly limited the film's appeal. It will strike some as too bitter for comfortable entertainment. Carole Lombard, Brian Aherne and Ann Shirley are effective in rôles reflecting the novelist's fullness. The temper of the film is adult. (RKO)

SEVENTEEN. There is enough youthful exuberance left in this much-done Tarkington novel to justify this latest version, and Jackie Cooper and Betty Field join forces to make its tale of adolescent trials and triumphs affecting and amusing in turn. Louis King has directed with more sympathy than originality, and the familiar action will probably find its strongest support among those it so gently satirizes. (Paramount)

A CHUMP AT OXFORD. Laurel and Hardy's invasion of the ivy bowers of Oxford is productive of more broad amusement than was Robert Taylor's, and the story of two heroic street sweepers who win a chance at higher education after brooding over their brooms for years is replete with ready-made absurdities. There is a refreshing lack of labored authenticity in Hal Roach's Oxford, and the hazing episodes are funnier than anything ever hatched in the undergraduate mind. (United Artists)

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EVENTS

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DUBIOUS methods of improving matrimonial felicity were espoused by spouses. . . . In Los Angeles, a newlywed husband, in addition to his bride, brought another woman friend along on his honeymoon. The bride did not like the idea, sought a divorce. . . . In Ohio, a wife, anxious to sober up her husband, ran her automobile into him. Her spouse, sobered by the impact of the car, became irritable, criticized her methods. . . . A low opinion, frequently expressed, of a wife's mental processes at the auction-bridge table, started a marital rift in St. Louis. . . . An effort to make prisoners more contented with their lot was glimpsed. In Honolulu, a man in jail for seven weeks received an unemployment compensation check each week. . . . The relation existing between love and unemployment compensation was clarified. Declaring that a worker should not be discharged for "a decline in efficiency due to love or lovesickness," the Division of Unemployment Compensation in Chicago decreed that anyone so discharged should immediately receive unemployment fund benefits because "love is in the class with floods, earthquakes and other cataclysms of nature known as acts of God." . . . The much-discussed problem—why a warship is called "she"—appeared on the verge of solution. A United States Admiral, following a study of the question, declared a warship is thus called because of the huge cost to keep it in paint and powder. . . . Breaks with tradition were halted. . . . An Eastern college man, instead of putting a 20,000-word treatise on paper, put it on phonograph disks, handed the disks to his professor. Will elementary and high-school teachers soon be listening to home-work played on the victrola? educators asked. No answer was forthcoming. . . .

The recent prodigious development of false-alarm activity is caused, in part, by the passing of the frontier and by unemployment among youth, social students maintained. False alarms were reported increasing in many sections. In Jersey City, a young false-alarm hobbyist turned in seven successive alarms from different districts in one night. In New England, a man reported a false SOS alarm, had Coast Guard vessels searching for a fictitious ship in distress. Their forefathers had jobs and new frontiers to wrestle with, but modern youths, with few jobs and no unconquered frontiers, find the false-alarm one of the few stimulating modes of self-expression left them, these social students argued. Firemen and Coast Guardsmen urged youth to seek some other channel of self-expression. . . . The value of apples in keeping doctors away was known even to the ancients. New, unsuspected qualities in the apple—the power to keep not only doctors but also robbers away—have just been revealed. Hurling a hard apple at a robber, a Pittsfield, Mass., policeman felled the thief, captured him. . . .

Cholly Knickerbocker, top-flight society columnist, writing of New York society in the *Journal-American*, describes the profound change that has occurred within a relatively short period. It is not so long ago, he points out, when "the advent of Lent called a halt on all frivolity. Balls and dances were given up, large prandial events were shelved, and almost every form of Mayfair gaiety was abandoned for forty days and forty nights." Divorce then was the exception; today it is the rule. "And their attitude toward Lent is equally revolutionary. No one in New York society . . . bothers to observe Lent." . . . In other words, New York society has drifted back into paganism. So has society in other cities. So have great numbers of non-socialites throughout the land. . . . For the descendants of those Catholics who left the Church at the time of the Reformation there has been a 400-year twilight of Christianity. The twilight is now ending. The night is beginning.

THE PARADER